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THE SECOND EDITION.

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WEST INDIA QUESTION.

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THE SECOND EDITION.

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JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE-S REET.

MDCCCXXVI.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES,
Northumberland court.

It is of extreme importance that, prior to the introduction into Parliament, in the course of the present Session, of any measures connected with what may be called the "West India Question," the actual position of that Question should be accurately examined and understood in all its points and bearings.

In order that this examination may be made with effect, it will be necessary shortly to advert to the period when the consummation of the efforts of those benevolent men who pressed on, with unwearied zeal, to effect the abolition of the British Slave Trade, was finally accomplished in the year 1807.

A perusal of the Speeches of those Members of both Houses of Parliament who enforced the policy and necessity of the abolition of the Slave Trade, will clearly demonstrate that they anticipated from that abolition, effects different from

those which have actually occurred. They contemplated the average maintenance of the price of sugar, the main commodity of the West Indies, as compared with its price at the period when the abolition took place; and they reasoned (and reasoned most correctly on that hypothesis) to this effect: If importation be stopped, and if the demand for sugar increase progressively, the Slaves will become so valuable to the West Indian Proprietors, that, as far as their physical interest is concerned, they will be materially benefited; the Masters will feel the absolute necessity of promoting the increase of their Slaves; the consequence will be a rapid addition to the number of Creoles, and a diminution of any labours now imposed upon them, which can in any way impede the birth of children; and the most efficient means whereby Slave population can be increased, will be the institution of marriage and the cessation of that promiscuous intercourse which now universally prevails among the Negroes. The interest of the Planters themselves will combine with circumstances to produce that state of things in which transitions have been made from Slavery to Freedom in other parts of the world. Slavery will merge into a sort of caste. The *villeins en gros*, the *villeins regardant*, and the copyhold Bondsmen of our early history, will find their analogies in the transitions which will take place in the West Indies,—until at last this most de-

sirable object, the termination of Slavery as a state, will be effected by a combination of those progressive causes which will arise out of the very nature of things. Any person who will read the history of the discussions of that period must concur in the opinion, that such were the views of the Abolitionists of that day: nor is there any reason to suppose that they are in any degree prepared to deny that these views were at that time entertained by them. It will now be necessary to examine how far the circumstances which have actually taken place correspond with those which were thus anticipated.

The acquisition of the Dutch Colonies, whose land is by far the most fertile of that of all our Transatlantic Sugar Colonies, with the exception of Trinidad, furnished such an increase of the supply of Sugar as necessarily lowered its price. The effect of that lowering of the price, it is unnecessary to observe, was to diminish the profits of the West India Planters, more or less, in proportion to the fertility or barrenness of their land. But, as the excess of production of British Sugar could always find a vent in the markets of the world, if causes had not conspired to increase the quantity of Sugar flowing into those markets, the excess of the supply from the Dutch Colonies would have found a vent in the foreign market, and the diminution of price, which has actually occurred, would not have taken place to the same

extent. But the European market began to be fed from sources which ought to have been distinctly contemplated by the Abolitionists of that day, who had executed, it is true, their solemn purpose, but had executed it with that imperfection which is more or less incident to all human efforts. France was in the zenith of her glory, and the expectation must have been faint and improbable that she would consent, at the accomplishment of any pacification of Europe, to abandon the Slave Trade, a fertile source of her wealth and power, and against the continuance of which no degree of public opinion operated, as in our own country, with slow and progressive effect. To say nothing of America, Holland and Spain were at the beck of France, and Portugal, a weak though willing ally of Great Britain, might be compelled to adopt the interest of France, not, perhaps, on this point, foreign to her own. During the war, the activity of British cruisers might be sufficient to check the continuance of the Slave Trade; but, since the period of its termination, the European market has been fed by the effects of a Slave-trade immeasurably more active, more intense, and more destructive, than any which had previously existed,—one which has concentrated in itself the activity, the intensity, and the destruction, which would have been spread over the Slave Trade of the world, if that of Great Britain had not been entirely abo-

lished, and that of other nations partially abolished under her influence. The abolition of the Slave Trade on the part of Great Britain, the most honourable and praiseworthy act in her legislation (which, on other accounts, may claim comparison with the legislation of any country in the world), operated as an encouragement to the foreign Slave Trade, both in its licensed and unlicensed character. The licensed Slave Trade was carried on with an activity having reference to the period of its termination. The unlicensed Slave Trade was carried on with an activity proportioned to the profits produced by the importation of new Slaves.

The Abolitionists of 1807, confident of the results that would spring from the abolition of the Slave Trade in our West Indian possessions, never hesitated for one moment to admit the true and irrefragable principle, that it was contrary to human nature, and unattainable by any combination of human laws, to emancipate Slaves even with advantage to themselves, much less without ruin to their Masters, except by the intervention of slow and progressive transitions. It would almost appear that that part of the body of Abolitionists of the present day, who were the leaders of the body of Abolitionists of 1807, are so impatient at the nonfulfilment of their prophecies, that they are prepared to sacrifice the principles which accompanied them.

A pamphlet has recently appeared, from the pen of Mr. Stephen, entitled, "England enslaved "by her own Slave Colonies." It is proposed, in the following pages, to examine the principles and opinions expressed in that pamphlet, as far as they be found to bear upon "the West India Question," and on those measures which have been carried into effect in consequence of the Resolutions of the House of Commons in May, 1823.

The main object of Mr. Stephen's publication is, to call on the Public to strengthen the Government in one sense, and to force them in another, with respect to the practical measures to be carried into effect in those West Indian Colonies, having Legislatures, which shall refuse to adopt the system of meliorating measures developed in the Order in Council for Trinidad. In page 81, Mr. Stephen addresses the following advice to the Electors of the United Kingdom, with respect to the pledges to be demanded from Candidates. "Whoever the Candidate may be, demand of "him, as the condition of your support, that he "will solemnly pledge himself to attend in his "place, whenever any measure is brought for-"ward for the mitigation and progressive termi-"nation of Slavery by Parliamentary enactments; "and that he will give his vote for every measure "of that kind, not inconsistent *with the temperate* "*and prudent spirit of the Resolutions of May* 1823,

" and the recommendations of His Majesty's Go-
" vernment founded on those Resolutions." This practical recommendation of Mr. Stephen but ill accords with the general tone of reasoning which pervades his work, and with those uncompromising denunciations against the state of Slavery, whether considered politically, economically, or morally, which are to be found in every page of it. It is well known that the Resolutions moved by Mr. Canning in May 1823, were intended to bind Parliament to a more practical and temperate course of proceeding on the subject, than that which was involved in the more enthusiastic Resolution moved by Mr. Fowell Buxton. The Resolution of Mr. Buxton was precisely in keeping with the reasoning in Mr. Stephen's pamphlet. It was as follows. " That the State of Slavery
" is repugnant to the principles of the British
" Constitution and to the Christian Religion, and
" that it ought to be gradually abolished through-
" out the British Colonies, with as much expedi-
" tion as may be found consistent with a due
" regard to the well-being of the parties con-
" cerned." It will be observed, that this Resolution contains no explanation of the phrase, " the
" parties concerned;" and the expression " well-
" being," having naturally more of a physical than of a pecuniary sense, would appear to limit it to the Slaves. The Resolutions which were proposed by Mr. Canning, assented to by Mr. Buxton

in preference to his own, and unanimously passed by the House of Commons, and by which the Government and Parliament are equally bound to abide, contemplated the interests of the Planter as strongly as they did those of the Slave. They were as follow. "First, that it is expedient to "adopt effectual and decisive measures for ame-"liorating the condition of the Slave Population "in his Majesty's Colonies. Second, that through "a determined and persevering, but at the same "time judicious and temperate enforcement of "such measures, this House looks forward to a "*progressive improvement* in the character of the "Slave Population, such as may prepare them "for a participation in those civil rights and "privileges which are enjoyed by other classes "of his Majesty's subjects. Third, that this "House is anxious for the accomplishment of this "purpose, at the earliest period that shall be "compatible with the well-being of the Slaves "themselves, with the safety of the Colonies, and "with *the fair and equitable consideration of the* "*interests of private property*."

If a sentence in the English language be susceptible of a definite explanation,—if collocation of words can convey to the human mind a clear idea, these Resolutions convey two pledges: the one, the emancipation of the Slaves at some future period; the other, compensation to the Planters, if their pecuniary interests can be shown to have

suffered, under a "*fair and equitable consideration*" of their case.

In consequence of these Resolutions, an order, framed under the direction of the Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, was passed by the King in Council, imbodying the main points which had been previously agreed to, not only by his Majesty's Government (and announced by Mr. Canning in the House of Commons), but also by many Members of the West India body in this country.

The following is an abstract of the original Trinidad Order, and a statement of the modifications which it subsequently received, under directions from the Secretary of State, as they appear from the papers printed and laid before Parliament.

Protector of Slaves.

Clause 1—confirms the Procurador Syndic, in his Office of Protector of Slaves.

Clause 2—requires the Protector to keep an Office in Port of Spain.

Clause 3.—Protector of Slaves is to have no interest in Slaves in the Island, directly or indirectly.

Clause 4—authorizes the Governor to

give to the Protector of Slaves leave of absence for three months in case of illness.

Clause 5—authorizes the Governor, in the event of absence, &c., of the Protector, to appoint as Deputy one who would not be incompetent to be Protector according to the provisions of the Order.

Clause 6—declares the Protector to be a Magistrate, with the powers which are possessed by the Commandants.

Clause 7.—Commandants of Quarters are declared to be Assistant Protectors, to execute the instructions of the Protector.

By proclamation of June, 1824, Commandants and other Officers and Tribunals therein mentioned, are authorized within their respective jurisdictions, and the Procurador Syndic, in all cases, to hear and determine complaints of Slaves.

Clause 8.—Notice of all prosecutions of Slaves for capital offences, or of suits

wherein the right of any alleged Slave to freedom may be the question, &c., is required to be given to the Protector, who is to attend the trial, &c.

Clause 9—confirms the Ordinance of 16th Nov. 1823, limiting Sunday Markets to ten o'clock in the morning, until the Governor should be instructed to issue a proclamation for the total abolition.

Sunday Markets.

Clause 10.—Persons working Slaves, or procuring them to work for their Master's benefit, between sunset on Saturday and sunrise on Monday, are to be fined not exceeding fifty nor less than five dollars—this not to extend to domestic service, or to the preservation of cattle upon the plantation.

Sunday Labour.

By proclamation of October, 1824, this is not to be construed to authorize a Slave to hire himself to work, either to his Owner or any other person within these hours, except for the preservation of the crops. Slaves may be employed for hire, with their own consent, provided they are so hired by their owner,

or by others with the consent of the owner in writing. The rate of wages, below which it is declared illegal to hire Slaves between these hours, is to be fixed and notified to the public by the Protector. It is further directed, that the exemption from labour between these hours, is not to extend to the cases of watchmen, nurses, and persons concerned in the interment of the dead, or in extinguishing any fire, or otherwise preventing irreparable damage or injury to the property of her or his owner. And the proclamation farther limits what is to be considered as "*preventing irreparable injury*" &c., beyond which the service of the Slave must be voluntary, and paid for.

Carrying the Whip in the Field, &c.

Clause 11.—To carry the whip into the field, or to use it for the purpose of coercing Slaves to labour, or to carry it elsewhere as an emblem of authority, is declared illegal.

Flogging Males.

Clause 12.—Male Slaves are not to be flogged beyond twenty-five stripes, or unless their persons be free from lacera-

tion, or until twenty-four hours have elapsed from the commission of the offence, or unless a free person be present besides him who inflicts the punishment. This not to extend to punishments inflicted on males by virtue of a judgment of any Court.

By proclamation of June, 1824, all punishments, which by it are authothorized to be inflicted upon Female Slaves, may also be inflicted upon Males. (Vide next clause.)

Flogging Females.

Clause 13—abolishes Female Flogging. Females committing offences, which were heretofore punishable by flogging, to be subject to such punishments as would be sanctioned by a proclamation intended to be issued in the Island.

By proclamation of June, 1824, Female Slaves may be punished by their owners by solitary confinement, with or without work, not exceeding three days; by stocks for the hand, during the hours of labour, not exceeding thirty minutes; by house-stocks, for the hands or feet, during the day, not exceeding six hours;

Female Punishments.

by bed-stocks for the feet, during the night; by handcuffs, distinguishing dresses, with or without stocks; by distinguishing marks, to be suspended from the neck, with or without stocks; by confinement, either solitary or otherwise, during one of the hours of noon, with or without task-work. But in all cases of confinement beyond twelve hours, a sufficiency of food is to be supplied. It further declares, that offences requiring higher punishment are to be referred to certain Magistrates and tribunals therein mentioned, who are empowered either to extend the punishments already authorized, or inflict others.

By proclamation of October, 1824, Female Children (Slaves), under ten years, may be whipped as Children of free condition.

Record of Punishments.

Clause 14—directs that a plantation record book be kept of all punishments of Female Slaves, and of all punishments of Males by flogging, exceeding three stripes.

By proclamation of October, 1824, entry need not be made of any punishment inflicted upon Female Slaves, other than such punishments as are authorized by proclamation of June, 1824, to be substituted for flogging.

Clause 15—states the penalties to be incurred for an omission to make the necessary entries of punishments, or for making erasures, &c., in the record.

Clause 16—directs transcripts of the records to be produced and sworn to at stated periods before the commandants.

Clause 17.—Commandants to give notice to the public, of the time and place when and where they will receive the returns.

Clause 18—declares the penalty for refusing to make returns, &c., to be a fine not exceeding 100*l.* nor less than 10*l.*

Clause 19.—Commandants directed to transmit their returns to the Protector, within fourteen days after they are completed.

Clause 20.—The Protector is to keep records of such returns.

Illegal Punishment.

Clause 21—declares that upon the prosecution of the Master for an illegal punishment, if the Slave shall exhibit to the Court marks of recent laceration, and declare it to be the consequence of illegal punishment, and make a particular statement of all the circumstances, then the *onus probandi* shall lie upon the master to show, either that he did not inflict the alleged punishment, or that it was a lawful one according to the provisions of the order. It further requires the Protector to conduct every such prosecution.

Marriages of Slaves.

Clause 22—provides for the intermarriage of Slaves, and declares such marriage to be binding in law to all intents and purposes, whether celebrated by a Clergyman of the Established Church, a Roman Catholic Priest, or a Dissenting Minister.

Non-separation of Families.

Clause 23—declares the separation of families by judicial sale illegal.

Right of Slaves to Property.

Clause 24.—Slaves declared to be

competent to acquire and hold, &c., property in lands, within the island, or money, cattle, implements of husbandry, household furniture, and other effects of the like nature, and to bring an action in respect of the same, as if free.

Clause 25—directs the establishment of Savings Banks, and empowers the Slave, upon making his deposits, to make a declaration, which is to have the force of a will, of the disposition to be made of them in the event of his death. Savings Banks.

Clause 26—declares the Protector to be the Inspector of Savings Banks, and authorizes the Governor to appoint its officers, and make regulations for their government.

Clause 27—directs that a tender by a Slave of more than twenty dollars in any one week be not received, without the consent of the owner in writing being produced; but if such consent be refused, without sufficient cause, the Protector may require the Manager of the Bank to receive the deposit.

Clause 28—abolishes Fees on Manu- Manumissions

missions, except twenty shillings to the Registrar, to be paid by the Protector.

Clause 29—32.—Any Slave desirous of purchasing his or her own freedom, or that of his or her wife, husband, child, brother, or sister, or reputed wife, &c., is empowered to do so; and if the owner be unwilling or unable, from mortgages or minority, &c. &c., to grant the manumission; or if the owner demand a greater sum than is the value of the Slave, then the chief judge shall summon the parties before him; and if the owner shall refuse or be unable to effect such manumission, then one appraiser shall be appointed by the owner, and another by the Protector, and an umpire by the chief judge, who shall * value the Slave; and on the payment of the appraised value into the treasury, the Slave shall be manumitted. Such value to remain in the treasury, to abide the claim of the party lawfully entitled to the Slave.

Clause 33—requires the owner, in cases

* By proclamation of October, 1824, the expense of appraisement to be borne equally by master and Slave.

of manumission by private contract, to give notice of the same to the Protector, whose duty it is to ascertain that the owner has a good title in law, to prepare the deed of manumission, and to have it duly enrolled.

Clause 34.—In cases of voluntary manumissions of Slaves under six years of age or above fifty, or labouring under disease, the owner is required to enter into a bond, in a penalty of 200*l.* for the proper maintenance, &c., of such Slave, until the age of fourteen in the case of infants, and during his or her natural life in the case of adults above fifty, or diseased Slaves.

Clause 35.—Clergymen and Ministers are authorized to give to Slaves certificates of their understanding the nature of an oath, which certificates are to be kept on record by the Protector. Evidence.

Clause 36.—Such certificates declared sufficient to render Slaves competent witnesses in any Civil or Criminal Court, except where the master is concerned, or in trials affecting the life of a white man.

Salary of Protector.

Clause 37.—The Salary of the Protector is declared to be in lieu of all fees.

Protector, Returns required from.

Clause 38—directs the Protector to make to the Governor the returns, &c., therein mentioned, relating to the duties of his office, &c.

Protector, Returns of.

Clause 39.—Protector or Commandant making any interlineations, &c., in the returns required to be made as hereinbefore mentioned, declared guilty of a misdemeanour, and to be punished as hereinafter directed.

Oath.

Clause 40.—Affirmation of a Quaker to be admitted in lieu of any oath required by this order.

Penalties.

Clause 41—subjects any free person convicted of a misdemeanour under the order, to a fine of not less than 50*l.* or more than 500*l.*, or to imprisonment for not less than one, or more than six months, or to both fine and imprisonment, at the discretion of the Court convicting him: and if the conviction be for cruelty to a Slave, the Court may declare the property in such Slave to be forfeited to the King. All fines to be di-

vided between the King and prosecutor in equal moieties.

Clause 42—directs, that if any one shall be twice convicted of inflicting upon any Slave any cruel or unlawful punishment, he shall be declared incompetent to be an owner, &c., and his Slaves shall be forfeited to the King.

By proclamation of October, 1824.— Such forfeitures are not to be carried into effect before reference is made of the circumstances to His Majesty. Penalties.

Mr. Stephen strongly protests against this Order in Council, and says that it is an order with which he, as an Abolitionist, is not satisfied. It will be for Parliament to consider whether this order has not, contrary to the opinion of Mr. Stephen, laid the most salutary and effectual grounds for that "*progressive improvement in the character of the* "*Slave Population, which may prepare them for a* "*participation in those civil rights and privileges which* "*are enjoyed by other classes of His Majesty's sub-* "*jects;*" in other words, for ultimate freedom.

A reference has already been made to the views entertained by the Abolitionists of 1807, with respect to the mode in which their ultimate object,

the emancipation of the Slaves, could be safely attained. To show that Mr. Stephen himself, even at a later period, entertained opinions on this subject inconsistent with those which have induced him to pronounce a censure on the Order in Council for Trinidad, it is only necessary to refer to a pamphlet written by him in the year 1815, in support of the measure of a General Registry. In that pamphlet, he defends the Abolitionists from the charge of having denied, during the discussions which terminated in the abolition of the Slave Trade, a desire to effect the ultimate emancipation of the Slaves; and he states explicitly the views which were entertained by the Abolitionists with reference to that object. In contrasting the sentiments avowed by Mr. Stephen in that pamphlet with the tone which he now adopts, it is not intended to imply that he is to be reproached for having changed his opinions (which it is open to any man to do at any time, provided that he can show just cause for such change), but to show, on the one hand, that his former opinions were more correct than those which he at present entertains; and, on the other, to invite him to a more temperate degree of feeling towards those persons who differ from him, though not more widely than he now does from his former self. The following is an extract from the pamphlet to which reference has been made*:—

* Reasons for a General Registry, p. 8.

" Accused by their opponents of meditating a
" general emancipation, they denied the charge;
" but it was denied only in the insidious meaning
" of the imputation itself. They did not aim at
" an emancipation to be effected by insurrection
" in the West Indies, or to be ordained pre-
" cipitately by positive law; but they by no
" means denied, and scrupled not to avow, that
" they did look forward to an extinction of slavery
" in the Colonies, to be accomplished by the same
" happy means which formerly put an end to it in
" England; viz., by a benign, though insensible
" revolution in opinions and manners; by the
" encouragement of particular manumissions, and
" the *progressive melioration of the condition of*
" *the Slaves, till it should glide insensibly into general*
" *freedom.* They looked, in short, to an eman-
" cipation, of which not the the Slaves, but *the*
" *Masters, should be the willing instruments or*
" *authors.*"

To suppose that the Abolitionists of 1807 abandoned all contemplation of the ultimate emancipation of the Slaves, is, to advance a proposition so contrary to common sense, and so refuted by passages which may be quoted from their speeches and publications, that it would be a waste of time to press such a proposition. They ought to have contemplated that object, and they did contemplate it; but it was as the result of a series of progressive changes, such as

is so well described in the preceding passage quoted from Mr. Stephen; and the Order in Council for Trinidad, with which Mr. Stephen is so dissatisfied, appears to realize, as far as legislation can operate, the accomplishment of a transition from slavery to freedom, by the very means contemplated by Mr. Stephen himself; with this important exception, that the clause which has been called, (perhaps incorrectly), the compulsory manumission clause, was not contemplated by Mr. Stephen, as a part of any system which was to supersede a state of slavery by a state of freedom. The opinions of the Abolitionists of 1807 were unanimous, that emancipation could not profitably take place *until the Slaves had been prepared for its reception by an improvement of their character, growing out of an amelioration of their condition,* and involving necessarily a change of treatment which would approximate them to the state of free persons. Now, if reference be made to page 90 of Mr. Stephen's last pamphlet, the following passage will be found:—

"Dismiss the idle hope that Slavery will ever "be abolished, or materially alleviated, by the "will of the Masters, or by the laws of West "Indian Legislators. The often repeated, and "often refuted, pretence of actual improvement, "believe me, is all delusion. The worst and "most destructive branches of this oppression "(excess of labour, enforced by brutal means

" and insufficiency of sustenance,) *are as preva-*
" *lent as ever*, and must be so from the ne-
" cessary effects of the system, till controlled by
" parliamentary authority. I affirm it as a man
" who certainly knows the case; and who is
" preparing to adduce such evidence of its true
" nature as will satisfy the most incredulous."

By Mr. Stephen's own showing, therefore, emancipation would be dangerous, if accomplished in a more rapid manner than that which is involved in the regulations of the Trinidad Order; regulations, to protest against which there has been a strong disposition throughout the West Indies, and which Mr. Stephen now holds up to the contempt of the Abolitionists, as incompetent to fulfil the purposes of Parliament.

But, not to rest this part of the subject upon the opinions of Mr. Stephen alone, it will be necessary to select from the speeches and writings of the Abolitionists, some of the most remarkable passages expressive of their sentiments with respect to the emancipation of the Slaves. In a special Report which the Directors of the African Institution published in 1815, in answer to a pamphlet of Mr. Thorpe, is the following passage:—
" Mr. Thorpe quotes a passage from the Letter to
" Prince Talleyrand, and, with his usual boldness
" of misrepresentation, gives it as an avowal that
" it is not slavery, but the Slave Trade, that Mr.
" Wilberforce dislikes. This interpretation is

" put upon a passage in which that gentleman
" labours to clear up the mistake, still prevalent
" on the continent, of confounding the Abolition
" of the Slave Trade with the immediate eman-
" cipation of the Slaves in the Colonies. Mr.
" Wilberforce, in common with all the most dis-
" tinguished advocates of the Abolition, is anxious
" to show, that a mere cessation of the importa-
" tion of Slaves cannot occasion those *dangers*
" *which might justly be apprehended from the sudden*
" *emancipation of men, most of whom must be desti-*
" *tute of those habits which are necessary for enabling*
" *them to act with propriety as freemen:* and from
" this argument, Mr. Thorpe, with a remarkable
" disregard of candour, draws the conclusion, that
" Mr. Wilberforce does not look on the conti-
" nuance of slavery as an evil deserving of any
" attention.

" It is well known that the friends of abolition
" are the less inclined to recommend any hasty
" or violent measures for emancipation, because
" they are convinced that if new importations of
" Slaves be *completely* and *effectually* prevented,
" *this of itself must produce a material and progres-*
" *sive improvement in the condition of those already in*
" *the colonies, so as to lead in time to their emanci-*
" *pation.* Through a similar progress, the pea-
" santry of our own country and of the greater
" part of Europe have risen from the condition
" of serfs to that of free labourers, by means

" of a number of indulgences granted from time
" to time by the masters themselves, merely
" from a regard to their own interest. Expe-
" rience taught them that it was better policy to
" bribe their Slaves to be industrious, than to at-
" tempt compulsion; and from this motive, one
" privilege has been conferred after another, till,
" in the end, all that distinguished the condition
" of a Slave has been annihilated. The same
" causes will produce the same effects in the
" West Indies as in Europe; and however slow
" this progress may be supposed to be, history
" demonstrates that it is sure and invariable; for
" along with the advancement of civilization, do-
" mestic slavery has disappeared in every country
" where it has not been kept alive either by the
" practice of enslaving prisoners taken in war, or
" by the importation of Slaves from countries
" where that practice subsists. These views have
" been so often explained to the public, that no
" man of common information and of a decent re-
" gard to truth, could have represented them as
" implying indifference to the continuance of
" Negro Slavery."

The language used in Parliament by Mr. Wilberforce and the other leading Abolitionists, during the nineteen years of discussion which preceded the Abolition of the Slave Trade, will be found to accord with that of the African Institution in 1815, which has just been quoted.

On the 18th of April, 1791, Mr. Wilberforce used the following train of reasoning, in opposition to the argument, that an immediate Abolition of the Slave Trade, by displeasing the colonial legislatures, would prevent the enactment of laws for the protection of the Slaves, and thereby retard the melioration of their condition:—" But, " he must repeat it, this plan of amending the " situation of the Slaves, and securing their good " treatment by laws, was not inefficacious only, " but unsafe. He entered his protest against the " fatal consequences which might result from it; " and called on those who were most imme- " diately interested in the question, to lend " their serious attention to his argument. The " Negroes were creatures like ourselves; they " had the same feelings, and even stronger affec- " tions than our own: but their minds were un- " informed, and their moral characters were " altogether debased. Men in this state were " almost incapacitated for the enjoyment of civil " rights. In order to become fit for the enjoy- " ment of these, they must in some measure be " restored to that level from which they had been " so unjustly and cruelly degraded. To give " them a power of appealing to the laws, would " be to awaken in them a sense of the dignity of " their nature. The first return of life, after a " swoon, was commonly a convulsion, dangerous " at once to the party and to all around him.

" Such, in the case of the Slaves, he feared might
" be the consequence of a sudden communica-
" tion of the consciousness of civil rights. This
" was a feeling it would be dangerous to impart,
" till you should release them from such humi-
" liating and ignominious distinctions, as with
" that consciousness they would not endure. You
" must conduct them to the situation, having first
" prepared them for it, and not bring the situa-
" tion to them. To be under the protection of
" laws was, in fact, to be a freeman; and to
" unite slavery and freedom in one condition,
" was a vain attempt; they were, in fact, incom-
" patible, and could never coalesce. With this
" system, which he thus condemned, he wished
" to contrast *the Abolition*, which was *exactly such*
" *an agent*, if he might so express himself, *as the*
" *nature of the case required.* All hopes of supplies
" from the coast being cut off, *breeding would hence-*
" *forth become a general object of attention, the effects*
" *of which would not be confined merely to those*
" *greater articles of better feeding and milder dis-*
" *cipline, but would extend to innumerable other par-*
" *ticulars, which an act of Assembly could neither*
" *specify nor enforce.*"

On the 2d of April, 1792, we find the following passages in a speech of the same gentleman:—
" After what I have said, I am not afraid of being
" told I design to emancipate the Slaves. I will

" not, indeed, deny that I wish to impart to them
" the blessings of freedom. Who is there that
" knows their value, but must join with me in
" this desire? But the freedom I mean, is that
" of which, at present, they, alas! are not capable.
" True liberty is the child of reason and of order;
" it is, indeed, a plant of celestial growth, but the
" soil must be prepared for its reception; he that
" would see it flourish and bring forth its proper
" fruits, must not think it sufficient to let it shoot
" as it will in unconstrained licentiousness.

" Luxuriantia compescet, nimis aspera sano
Lævabit cultu, virtute carentia tollet.

" Would you, then, impart to them these in-
" estimable benefits,—take away that cause which
" at present obstructs their introduction."

* * * * *

" I frankly acknowledge that the consideration
" of the planter's benefit, from stopping the im-
" portations, does not interest me, in any degree,
" so much as that to be thence derived by the un-
" happy Slaves. Losing, by degrees, the painful
" recollection of their native and early connexions,
" conceiving new attachments to their dwelling-
" places, to their families, to their masters, they
" would gradually rise in the scale of beings; no
" longer ready every moment to start into insur-
" rections, they would cease to be the continual
" objects of the planter's jealousy and suspicion;

" it would be no longer necessary for the general
" safety to extinguish in them the principle of
" moral agency; they would feel more respectable
" in themselves, and be more respected by
" others, *and, by degrees, the harshness of their*
" *present bondage being transformed into the mildness*
" *of patriarchal servitude, they would become capable*
" *of still greater blessings and more ennobling privi-*
" *leges.*"

On the 11th of April, 1796, Sir Philip (then Mr.) Francis, in proposing a Bill "for the Regu-
" lation and Improvement of the Condition of the
" Slaves in the West Indies," (which was supported by some of the Abolitionists, but opposed by others, as being incapable of producing its intended effect without a total Abolition of the Slave Trade,) said—" Instead of bad Slaves, I would
" make the Negroes good servants. I am sure
" that the master's profit, on the whole, would
" grow with the freedom, and that even his morals
" would be mended by it. A good master makes
" a good servant, and *vice versâ*. But we are yet
" at too great a distance from this humble state
" of improvement. I do not aim at it imme-
" diately. Then what is it you propose? I mean,
" Sir, generally, in the first instance, to allow the
" Negroes every benefit and advantage compa-
" tible with a rational and profitable demand on
" their service; to mend their actual condition,
" to *prepare them gradually* for a better situation,

" and to *make them capable* of higher improve-
" ments."

On the 3d of July, 1804, the Bishop of St. Asaph gave the following explanation, in answer to an observation that the immediate emancipation of the Slaves was understood to be the object of the friends of the Bill for the Abolition of the Slave Trade:—" He had been much misconceived, if " it was thought that he had any view to farther " consequences than the Abolition of the Slave " Trade. He took that opportunity of declaring " that, in his opinion, that event would gradually " produce all the amelioration in the state and " condition of African Slaves that was practicable, " or, indeed, desirable, and that he looked to no " farther consequences whatever."

On the 30th of May, 1804, Mr. Wilberforce stated, that " after the question of Abolition was " disposed of, *any subsequent measures must be left* " *with the Colonial Assemblies themselves, and with* " *them it would rest how far the condition of the* " *Negroes was capable of greater improvement.* It " was not fair in those who opposed the Abolition, " to confound it with the question of emancipa- " tion, with which, in the first instance, it has no " immediate connexion."——In the same debate, he observed, " Let the Abolition once take " place; let it be established that there shall be " no other mode of keeping up the number of " Negroes but by encouraging their increase in

" the respective islands, and then the masters
" must feel an interest of the strongest kind to
" encourage their protection and support. No-
" thing short of this could correct the evils and
" remove the miseries connected with the system
" as it now existed."

On the 28th of February, 1805, Mr. Wilberforce said, " He had endeavoured, on various former
" occasions, to impress upon the House, the ad-
" vantages likely to result from changing this
" system, by showing that the Abolition of the
" Slave Trade from the coast of Africa would have
" many very beneficial effects. It would make
" it the obvious interest of the master that the
" Slave should be kept with as much care as pos-
" sible, because his place could not be supplied;
" after this, means would, of course, be adopted to
" take care of the health of every Negro, and also
" of his moral improvement; encouragement
" would be given to marriage, and other legiti-
" mate objects would be pursued, by which they
" would become populous, industrious, intelligent,
" moral, and happy; by which we should have a
" powerful, though laborious and obedient pea-
" santry, instead of a degraded race of beings,
" actuated only by brutal impulse." * * *
" And here he did not wish to avoid that part of
" the subject on which the opponents of the Abo-
" lition dwelt so much, he meant the eventual
" emancipation of the Negroes in the West Indies.

" He had never concealed that his hope was, that
" such might be the ultimate effect of the abolition
" of the African importation, *but that was a period,*
" *the distance of which he had never attempted to cal-*
" *culate,* although his opponents had charged him
" with having it immediately in view. Had that
" been his object, or even his hope, he should not
" deserve the word 'humane' to be added to his
" views, but a shorter one, and that was the word
" 'mad,' ought to be applied to his object. But
" although he felt that the immediate emancipa-
" tion of the Negroes in the West Indies could not
" be expected, for that before they could be fit
" to receive freedom, it would be madness to
" attempt to give it to them, yet he owned he
" looked forward, and so, he hoped, did many
" others, to the time when the Negroes in the
" West Indies should have the full enjoyment of a
" free, moral, industrious, and happy peasantry."

On the 10th of June, 1806, Mr. Fox (alluding to the increase of the Black population in North America, since the Abolition of the Slave Trade) said, " As that is the part of the world where po-
" pulation proceeds more rapidly than in any
" other, and as we know that within the last
" twenty years the population of Whites has
" doubled, and that of Negroes very nearly so,
" without importation, it affords, I will not say a
" damning, but a blessing proof, that our adopting
" a similar course would ultimately produce the

" happy effect of *a gradual emancipation*, of increas-
" ing population, of enabling Negroes to acquire
" property as the reward of long servitude, and
" thus place these islands in a state of safety be-
" yond any thing that could be done by fleets or
" armies."

In the same debate, the present Marquis of Lansdowne (then Lord H. Petty) said, "The Right Hon.
" Gentleman who has just sat down, in referring
" to what I said, has misunderstood me. He
" says that I spoke of free labour, and from
" thence not only drew a conclusion in favour of
" the Abolition of the Slave Trade, but also for the
" emancipation of the Negroes. Now, Sir, if he
" means that I am of opinion that the immediate
" Abolition of the Slave Trade should be accom-
" panied by a proclamation, granting immediate
" freedom to the Slaves in the West Indies, I can
" assure him I have no such wild, irrational, or
" impracticable idea. But if he means that I
" look to the Abolition of the Slave Trade as likely
" ultimately to produce emancipation, I certainly
" do conceive it possible, by amending the situa-
" tion of the Slaves, and by the *progressive im-*
" *provement of their minds, moral character, and*
" *habits, as far as they are capable of improvement in*
" *such a state, that they should pass from slavery to*
" *free labour, as they become fit for it. In that sense,*
" *and in that sense only, I look for the emancipation*
" *of the Negroes*."

The following remarks were made by Mr. Barham, in the same debate, and, together with those of Lord H. Petty, were alluded to by Mr. W. Smith, as expressing correctly the views of the Abolitionists: " As to the Slaves obtaining the condi-
" tion of free labourers, I am not one of those
" who deprecate the Abolition of the Slave Trade
" on a prospect of any evils arising from that con-
" dition of free labour which may be the result of
" it. That, however, is a state of things not to
" be brought forward by any act of Parliament
" here, but *preparation must be made for it by ren-*
" *dering the Slaves fit for freedom, and that must*
" *be accomplished gradually, by granting them, from*
" *time to time, as much freedom as they can bear,*
" *until they all become fit for it; but they should not*
" *have it sooner.*"

Mr. Wm. Smith. " I do hope, Sir, that after
" this night we shall hear no more of that silly
" calumny, that we are aiming at the immediate
" emancipation of the Slaves in the West Indies,
" which, for the last eighteen years, has been
" regularly fastened upon us every time the Abo-
" lition of the Slave Trade has been proposed,
" and as repeatedly denied by us, but which,
" with an inflexible unfairness (not to call it by
" any other name) has still continued to be im-
" puted to us. It has been repeatedly stated by
" us, that the emancipation of the Negroes in the
" West Indies, makes no part of the object we

" have in view in the Abolition of the African " Slave Trade, *in any other sense than that which* " *has been so well explained by the Noble Lord* (Lord " H. Petty) *and another gentleman, whom I am* " *happy to call my friend,* and I do hope that we " shall escape the repetition of this calumny."

In the same debate, Mr. Fox said, " But here " it is necessary for me to observe, that some " gentlemen have unaccountably misconceived " my meaning on the subject of slavery in the " West Indies. Some have conceived an opinion " that I had said something in favour of the eman- " cipation of the Slaves there. I certainly said " nothing for that emancipation, neither did I say " any thing against it, but now I will add a word " to that part of the subject." [Mr. Fox proceeded to argue that, with proper treatment, the Negroes would so multiply, that their number would be greater than would be required for the cultivation of the islands; and those who were not wanted might be safely emancipated and sent elsewhere. He then repeated that the Abolition of the Slave Trade and the emancipation of the Slaves were two points totally distinct; and he remarked that, if the Abolition of the Slave Trade could not be accomplished without the consent of the planters, there was ample proof that it would never be accomplished at all.] " But with re- " gard to emancipation, I perfectly agree in what " has been said, that the idea of *an Act of Par-*

" *liament to emancipate the Slaves in the West Indies,*
" WITHOUT THE CONSENT AND CONCURRENT FEEL-
" ING OF ALL PARTIES CONCERNED, BOTH IN THIS
" COUNTRY AND IN THAT, would not only be mis-
" chievous in its consequences, but totally extra-
" vagant in its conception, as well as impracti-
" cable in its execution, and therefore I see no
" good in discussing that point. The Abolition
" of the African Slave Trade is what I hope will
" soon be accomplished; but the emancipation
" of Slaves, or the end of slavery in the West
" Indies, is what I cannot hope to see. But if I
" were sure it would never have that effect, I
" should not be the less zealous in the cause in
" which I am engaged, because the Abolition of
" the African Slave Trade would be the accom-
" plishment of a great and good work, even if it
" should never be followed by the Abolition of
" slavery in the West Indies."

10th Feb. 1807. Lord Grenville was "glad to
" find that the opponents of the measure were
" nearly reduced to one argument, and that was
" that the Bill did not extend to the emancipation
" of the Slaves already on the islands. The at-
" tempted application, however, of the same jus-
" tice and humanity to both cases, resolved itself
" into this. In abolishing the Trade, we did jus-
" tice to the inhabitants of Africa, who were the
" parties aggrieved; but in giving liberty to the
" Slaves *on the islands, we should do the greatest*

" *injustice to them, in giving them that which they* " *would not know how to use,* and which would " only be productive to them of injury. That " liberty, the blessings of which we were enabled " *properly to estimate and appreciate, would be to* " *them, in their state of ignorance and barbarism, a* " *poison of the most baleful nature.*"

On the 23d of Feb. 1807, Lord Grey (then Lord Howick) said, " We have been told that if this " be considered as a measure of justice, we do " not follow up our own principles, for if slavery " be in itself unjust, we ought to abolish it altogether. I think it sufficient to say, that the " result of this measure will, I trust, lead to the " Abolition of Slavery, encouraged and assisted by " such regulations as the wisdom of Parliament " may afterwards think fit to adopt. I trust that " by this measure *slavery will gradually wear out,* " *without the immediate intervention of any positive* " *law,* in like manner as took place in the states of " Greece and Rome, and some parts of modern " Europe, where Slaves have been permitted to " work out and purchase their own freedom, and " that such regulations may be adopted as have " been in some of the Spanish and Portuguese " Colonies." [Lord H. further illustrated this by reference to some parts of the United States, and then observed,] "But the Abolition of Slavery *must* " *be gradually and not suddenly effected,* and this *both* " *on the principles of justice to the planters, and also*

" *to the Slaves themselves. For, in the present re-*
" *duced circumstances of the Slaves, to propose their*
" *immediate emancipation, would be to produce horrors*
" *similar to those which have already happened at*
" *St. Domingo.*

On the 17th of March, 1807, Earl Percy moved for leave to bring in a Bill for the gradual Abolition of Slavery. His plan was, that all children born after a certain time should be declared free. Sir C. Pole said, " that he rejoiced that " this measure had been brought forward thus " early, because it showed the cloven foot which " had been attempted to be concealed: he be- " lieved that this was one main object in view by " the Abolitionists," &c. *Mr. Wilberforce* said " that, had the motion proceeded from a less re- " spectable quarter, he should have been as glad " as the Hon. Baronet, that it had been made; " because it would shew that he and those who " thought with him made the distinction between " the Abolition of the Trade and the *emancipation* " *of the Slaves, and not only abstained from proposing* " *the latter, but were ready to reject such a proposition* " when made by others. How much soever he " looked forward with anxious expectation to the " period when the Negroes might with safety be " liberated,—he knew too well the effect which " the long continuance of abject slavery produced " upon the human mind, to think of their im- " mediate emancipation—a measure which, at

" the present moment, would be injurious to them
" and ruinous to the Colonies. He and those who
" acted with him were satisfied with having
" gained an object which was safely attainable;
" they had always declared, what he now re-
" peated, that the sole point which they had *in*
" *view was, the Abolition of the Slave Trade, and not*
" *the emancipation of the Slaves. The enemies of the*
" *Abolition had always confounded those two objects—*
" *the friends of the Abolition had always distinguished*
" *them.*"

Mr. Sheridan expressed, at some length, his approbation of Lord Percy's motion. After which Mr. Wilberforce, in explanation, " denied ever
" having disavowed his wish that freedom should
" be ultimately communicated to the Slaves. He
" deprecated the discussion at present, because
" he looked to the gradual improvement of their
" minds, and to the diffusion among them of those
" domestic charities which would render them
" more fit than he feared they now were to bear
" emancipation.

Mr. Wilberforce, in his " Letter to the Freeholders and other Inhabitants of Yorkshire," published in 1807, (pages 256 to 259) notices the charge made against the Abolitionists, of aiming at *immediate* emancipation, and also the charge of inconsistency preferred against them for *not* immediately emancipating the Slaves. He denies the former, and refutes the latter by the same

arguments which have been extracted from his speeches in the preceding pages; and he concludes thus—"It (*i. e.* liberty) is indeed a 'plant "of celestial growth,' but the soil and climate "must be prepared for its reception, or it will not "bring forth its proper fruits. These are fruits, "alas! which our poor degraded Negro Slaves "are as yet incapable of enjoying. To grant it "to them immediately, would be to ensure not "only their master's ruin, but their own. A cer-"tain previous course of discipline is necessary. "They must be trained and educated for this "most perfect state of manly maturity; and, by "a singular felicity of coincidence, the stoppage "of all further importations from Africa, with all "the consequences which it introduces in its "train, is *the very shortest and safest path by which* "*the Slaves can travel to the enjoyment of true li-*"*berty*."

To revert, however, to the quotation made from Mr. Stephen's "Reasons for a General Registry." In that passage, it is stated how desirable it is that the masters should be the "willing instruments or authors" of the freedom of the Slaves. He now contends that the consent of the local legislatures in the Legislative Colonies is in no degree necessary or *desirable*, in carrying into effect a law to be imposed by the British Parliament; and he advances the extraordinary position that the meliorating laws should be executed by per-

sons not having any cognizance of the circumstances or habits of Slaves, in other words, by perfect strangers.

To admit that the consent of the local legislatures was *absolutely necessary*, would be to admit that Parliament had passed resolutions which it was not in its power to enforce. But to assert that their consent is not *desirable*, is to advance (to say the least) a very extraordinary proposition. Let it be supposed that an Act of Parliament should be passed, imbodying the clauses of the Trinidad Order, and that Parliament should require such Act to be received as law in the West Indian Colonies. The practical opposition of the West Indians might be twofold. They might deny the right of Parliament to enact such a law, as involving the general question of internal interference; and in that case, their opposition would be directed, not against the details, but against the authority of the law. On the other hand, there might be a general indisposition to facilitate the practical execution of the law; and if that were the case, it might be difficult to devise the machinery of such a law, so as to produce those beneficial consequences for which it had been framed. In this reasoning, it is not meant to be implied that, if *permanent contumacious* resistance were to take place, it migth not be necessary to interfere—whether such interference were in the character of enforcement of law, or of punishment

of contumacy. In that case, one of these alternatives, however abstractedly undesirable, might be most necessary to be adopted. But all that is contended is, that the practical difficulty incident to a forced legislation should be avoided by every effort which reason and temperance can suggest.

Let it not be supposed, however, for one moment, that it is the object of this publication, to imply that those enactments which form part of the Trinidad Order in Council *ought not* to be adopted in spirit, according to local circumstances, by the various legislatures throughout the West Indies. Its object is to shew, that *those enactments being so adopted*, all has been done which can in prudence and justice be attempted for the present. The result must be the work of time, and the impatience of benevolence must yield to the laws of nature. With respect to the mode in which the practical adoption of these measures by the Legislatures is to be compassed, it is only necessary to repeat, that every effort which reason and temperance can suggest, should precede any measures of direct authority.

But there may be still those who will contend for instantaneous and compulsory legislation, and who will enquire, Has not such legislation taken place in Trinidad? The answer is—first, that mode of legislation was the undisputed constitutional mode: it has never been pretended that the authority of any body competent to enact laws

was superseded in Trinidad by the passing of an order in Great Britain. And, secondly, the previously existing state of law in Trinidad, and the habits of the community founded upon it, did much more nearly approach to the spirit of the clauses in the Trinidad Order in Council than will be found to be the case in any other West Indian Colony.

Mr. Stephen has taken especial care, in this pamphlet, to blend together two questions which, in all practical discussions respecting the fulfilment of the Resolutions of the House of Commons in 1823, ought, in equity, to be kept distinct and separate, namely, the question of Slavery in the West Indies, and the question of the Commercial Monopoly given to the West Indian Colonies. If there were not a single Slave in the West Indies, the West Indians might protest, *ex-parte*, against any relaxation of duty, whether with respect to East Indian or to foreign sugar, on the ground that sugar cultivation in the West Indian Islands had been fostered by British Acts, upon the principle of monopoly, and that it would, therefore, be unjust to depart from that principle, unless in the most cautious and progressive manner:—such monopoly being founded on the principle that the articles produced were the result of capital and industry exclusively British, and being precisely analogous to that monopoly which exists with respect to articles of British growth.

On the other hand, the Abolitionists might argue, *ex-parte,* that it was unwise and contrary to sound principles of political economy, to maintain the West Indian monopoly any longer, and that it was clearly right to diminish the duties on East Indian and foreign sugar. It would not be inconsistent to assert that the West Indian Colonies ought not to have a monopoly, and, at the same time to contend that the planter ought not to be deprived of the services of his Slave without compensation. Indeed, if the monopoly were removed, any diminution of labour would only prejudice the planter the more, and give him a still stronger claim for compensation;—such compensation being limited to that point where necessary and humane regulation ends, and where compulsory substitution of money for labour begins.

But what remedies does Mr. Stephen propose with reference to the existence of slavery in these Colonies? His first recommendation is, to diminish the duty on East Indian sugar, which, it must be remembered, is prepared by men, if not in a state of slavery like that of the African blacks in the West Indies, yet under circumstances of unequivocal coercion, and absence of any thing like the idea which is conveyed by the term "*freedom*" to the mind of an Englishman. His second recommendation is, to admit the import of sugar raised in foreign colonies, where not only the evil of slavery as a recognised state

exists, but where that state is aggravated twenty-fold by the introduction of fresh Slaves, whether of permitted or of illicit importation. How can he reconcile it to himself to abstain from the sugar of a British plantation, on a principle of privation to himself, involving calamity to the producer of that British plantation sugar, and yet to indulge in the luxury of foreign Slave sugar, for the benefit of the foreign producer?

The following statement will justify the imputation of this intention to him. Mr. Stephen expresses himself favourably towards the new system of colonial policy, which the measures of the last Session have introduced. He confesses that he is almost a convert to that system. He says, "Let me not be understood, then, as condemning in the abstract these new principles, "or the applying them, if impartially done, to "our colonial trade and navigation." He then proceeds to show that their application has not been impartial, in the following passage. "Unhappily, this great commercial and maritime "revolution had some awkward modifications, "some striking departures from its own principles, and exceptions to its own rules; and "upon every one of these, West Indian interests, "and West Indian views, were so legibly written, "that if the West Indian Committee had sat in "council with the Board of Trade, and guided its "resolutions, the new code could not have been

" better framed for the gratification of our planters.
" The general principle is the favourite maxim of
" political economists, that trade should be per-
" fectly free. The colonial monopoly *, therefore,
" ought clearly to have been abolished on both
" sides; but it was relaxed only where it was re-
" strictive on the planter, and continued only
" where it made for his advantage. He may now
" sell his sugar where and to whom he pleases,
" but the English consumers are still bound, as
" before, to buy it. Foreigners may bring us what
" they please, except any thing that West India
" planters have to sell. As to protective duties,
" they should no longer have a place in our Cus-
" tom-house vocabularies; the very name is here-
" tical by the new faith; for commerce can be
" protected only 'by itself.' Ay, but our planters
" were here a little sceptical, and thought that
" 36*s*. per cwt. additional duty on sugar, and
" 84*s*. additional duty on coffee, of foreign growth,
" would be better than theoretical security
" against rivalship in the British markets; and
" plain men, perhaps, will suspect that they were
" right; for they were humoured in this whim;
" and we are now paying on an average from 42*s*.
" to 45*s*. per cwt. for sugar, which a year or two
" ago we bought at an average of from 27*s*. to

* The monopoly of the mother-country as to the supply of her staple articles, may be considered as only partially relaxed.

"30*s*." If, therefore, the partiality of which he complains were removed, protective duties would "no longer have a place in our Custom-house "vocabularies;" and, in that case, foreign sugar, grown not only by Creole, but by newly-imported Slaves, might be imported for the consumption of the English people.

Mr. Stephen adverts to the expense sustained by the mother-country for the sake of the West Indian Colonies in time of war, and to the loss of life incident to their retention. Would not eight-tenths of that expense, if not the whole, have been incurred, had these Colonies been British Colonies with a free instead of a Slave population? And was not that mortality during the war—a circumstance incident to a state of war, rather than to a state of slavery? It was the value of these Colonies which attracted the efforts of the enemy towards them; and if that value had existed in the absence of slavery, what cause would have diminished the mortality or the expense?

Mr. Stephen asserts that one of the causes of the poverty and diminishing value of the West Indian Colonies is the exhaustion of the soil, in consequence of the want of manure, which arises from the substitution of the labour of men for the labour of cattle, and he also mentions the absence of necessary implements as a cause of the increased expense of production in the West Indies. If this were the case, the first duty of

the Abolitionists would have been to publish a practical statement of the manner in which the labour of cattle could be substituted, with advantage, for the labour of Slaves, and in which the employment of implements or machinery, would have superseded or diminished the intensity of manual labour now performed. Does such a publication exist? It does not; and the reason is, that no man has been able to show the policy, in a pecuniary point of view, of making these proposed alterations. More than two years have elapsed since the Society of Arts publicly offered a premium of 50*l.* for the best essay on this subject: and does Mr. Stephen think that, if he had been enabled to supply such an essay, he would not have done more to vindicate the purposes of practical humanity, than by venting denunciations against slavery as a state,—when, whether in theory or in practice, no man will be found to defend that state, except as one which has been so far fostered and confirmed by British legislation, as to require some principle of national compensation to be applied, should injurious consequences accrue to the property of those persons whose interests are involved in its continuance? Does he really mean to maintain that the West Indians would *permanently* adhere to this accursed system of slavery, if the substitution of cattle, machinery, or implements, or the introduction of new management, could compensate to them for

the difference between the price of Slave labour and the price of free labour, producing similar, or nearly similar, results of production?

Mr. Stephen attempts to show that a principle of favouritism, with respect to the West Indian Colonies, has long prevailed in the measures of the Government; and, as one instance in proof of this assertion, he refers to the encouragement given to the West India Company. From the mode of argument which he adopts on this point, he appears to consider that if a Planter, having, for example, two hundred Slaves, were to pay to an individual Mortgagee interest at the rate of six per cent. on a debt of 20,000*l.* coupled with the necessity of not only consigning his sugar to such Mortgagee, but also of restricting himself from the production of any other article not equally consignable, the Slaves on his estate would be in better circumstances than they would be if the West India Company gave him an opportunity of paying off his mortgage, by a fresh mortgage, at five or four per cent. In other words, Mr. Stephen would appear to argue, that the prosperity of the Slave is coincident with the adversity of the Master. This argument, indeed, is expressed by the Abolitionists in a somewhat different form. They reason thus:—We do not mean to sustain the proposition which you have ascribed to us; but we mean to say, that the poorer the Proprietor of a sugar estate becomes,—the less as-

sistance he is enabled to receive, the greater the difficulties with which he is embarrassed,—the sooner will he be obliged to give up the cultivation of sugar altogether; and in his abandonment of sugar cultivation is involved the interest of his Slaves. But these gentlemen totally forget the misery and wretchedness to which the Slaves must be exposed, when the only chance which remains for the Master to continue that cultivation, which is his sole stake in life, is the keeping himself up to the level of average profits by overworking the Slave, whose extra labour is to supply him with the means of obtaining those profits. If the analogy of domestic agriculture be in any degree admitted, can any instance be shown in which the live-stock of a distressed farmer has been better fed and better treated, or even his labourers better paid, than those of a farmer whose industry was successful and remunerating? The extreme Abolitionists also forget that to prohibit any class of men, for such reasons, from deriving benefit from those pecuniary facilities which belong to a great and free country, is to make a sacrifice of principle for special purposes; to work out the accomplishment of a salutary end by unjustifiable means; which contravenes the very essence of sound morality.

One of the most popular and plausible arguments which are employed against the West India interest, has been prudently omitted, or at least

very partially adverted to by Mr. Stephen. The argument thus passed over, is that which is drawn from the present state of Hayti*, as a conclusive proof of the advantage, rather than the detriment, which would accrue to the West Indies from the emancipation of the Slaves. It is prominently put forward, in the Second Report of the Anti-Slavery Society, published in 1824, and is probably the most inconsequent argument that can be found in any paper gravely submitted for the information of the public. This Report alludes to the observation frequently made by the West Indians, that the Negroes, when they become free, will not work; and that the exports from the West Indies will therefore greatly diminish;—a proposition frequently put forward in West Indian publications, and supported by arguments, if not of a convincing, of a very forcible nature. The Report then puts into the mouths of the West Indians an assertion which they have never coupled with that proposition; viz., that all industry and exertion, on the part of the Slaves made free, will be at an end, and that they will merge again into the state of savages. At least, if such a proposition ever has been maintained, it is so gratuitously absurd, that it was not worth while to advert to

* In the Appendix will be found a tabular exhibition of the products of Hayti, at present and at former periods, which will supply the best commentary upon the validity of this argument.

it as a substantive argument on the part of the West Indian body. In Hayti, all industry and exertion in the production of sugar, formerly the main export of that Island, is at an end, at least for all purposes of profitable exportation; and yet the Slaves, so far from merging into the state of savages, carry on various processes of production with pecuniary advantage. If productive industry, whether casual or continuous, were to be considered as the sole test of civilization—in that case it might be contended, that civilization had retrograded in Hayti within the last thirty years; but such an opinion ought not to be admitted without very careful qualification. A reference to the tabular statement in the Appendix will show that, in the space of one year (1789) the French part of St. Domingo shipped to France alone as much sugar as amounted in value to half the price which President Boyer is to pay to France for the fee-simple of the whole Island.

It may be assumed, that the coerced and qualified freedom in Hayti (for the freedom there is but qualified and coerced) is a more happy state for the labouring free Black, than Slavery is for the Slave in Jamaica. Nor can it be denied that the capital of the former race of proprietors in that country, having been usurped by the Black race, may be beneficially employed in their hands; that is to say, the wealth created may be greater than the wealth consumed in its pro-

duction, although the capital is not employed in the cultivation of sugar, without which cultivation those former Proprietors would have been ruined, unless they had received compensation for its abandonment. Hayti may now be rich and powerful—she may become still more rich, and more powerful, under the operation of the new system of things, and independently of the exportation of sugar. But does this admission in any degree embarrass the maintenance of the proposition, that in our own West Indian Colonies, the transfer of capital from sugar production to any other class of production, cannot be effected without such serious injury as requires compensation? With this axiom in view, it is not to be expected that the West Indian Planters will accept the example of Hayti as an encouragement to press forward a state of things, which, as far as the analogy of Hayti can be taken, will lead to a discontinuance of the production of sugar. At least, they could not be expected voluntarily to press on this course, if compensation were not secured to them,—until it could be shown, on the one hand, that that species of production which has succeeded the production of sugar in Hayti, would prove so beneficial to them, as to prevent all the inconveniences of the change; or, on the other hand, that their Slaves, when made free, would be more willing to submit to the exertion of sugar cultivation, than the freed Slaves of

Hayti have been found to be. The Colonial Proprietor of sugar, as a British subject, has an inherent right of employing his capital in the most productive manner. Can he with justice be compelled to employ his capital less profitably, without being compensated for the transfer? If this principle, then, be applied to the state of Hayti, we shall find that all those arguments which bring forward the present state of that country as an imitable model, and as a reason to justify *abolition without compensation*, are more specious than real, and cannot be applied, with logical effect, in any closely-reasoned argument on the state of West Indian Slavery.

Keeping this principle in view, the reader will be more prepared to appreciate the weakness of the argument contained in the following passage from the Second Report of the Anti-Slavery Society: "But to console us under this "alarm, let us look again to Hayti. There the "Slaves were to the full as depressed as our "Slaves now are, and much more ignorant. They "have been engaged also in a struggle for liberty, "through a long-protracted period of blood and "desolation, of confusion and anarchy. Twenty "years of sanguinary conflict, of the most bar-"barizing description, sometimes with foreign, "sometimes with domestic enemies, were little "calculated to train them to habits of industry, "or to the arts of peace. And yet what do we

" witness in their case? They have contrived,
" in the period which has since elapsed, at least
" to maintain themselves without foreign aid.
" Though it was necessary, and still unhappily
" is necessary, to keep a large portion of the ablest
" and most active labourers under arms (who are
" of course sustained by the labour of the rest,)
" their own exertions have alone ministered to
" their subsistence, as well as defrayed the entire
" expenditure of the state. They have not only
" abundantly supplied their wants by their own
" labour, but they have nearly, if not more than,
" doubled their numbers in twenty years. And
" while they have done this, they have been ad-
" vancing in intelligence, respectability, and
" wealth. Schools have been multiplied among
" them, knowledge has been widely diffused, the
" arts of civilized life have been cultivated, the
" reign of order and law has been established, secu-
" rity has been given to property, and industry,
" having its reward, has been progressively in-
" creasing its boundaries. *But, in reply to this,*
" *we are gravely told, that the Haytians export no*
" *sugar. This is the dark spot in their condition, for*
" *which nothing can compensate in the eye of a colonial*
" *partisan.* They may live in comfort, they may
" be well fed and well clothed, they may multi-
" ply their population, they may be free, united,
" powerful, and happy, but all this affords no
" satisfaction, since they do not cultivate sugar,

" and cultivate it in gangs, under the whip, as in " the English islands. And yet, that they labour " sufficiently to supply all their reasonable wants " is evident from this, that the value of foreign " merchandise imported into Hayti, in the year " 1822, and consumed there (the whole of which " must have been paid for by the produce of " Haytian labour) amounted, by the official returns " of that island, to three millions sterling."

With reference to this subject, it will be seen how necessary it is to distinguish between the resolutions moved by Mr. Canning, and that moved by Mr. Buxton. The example of Hayti would be a very fair example to be adduced by any person who was bound by Mr. Buxton's resolution, and by that resolution only. If Parliament stood only pledged to pursue measures with respect to the well-being of the Slaves (which was all to which Mr. Buxton's resolution pledged them), there can be no doubt that, with due management, the abandonment of sugar cultivation in the West Indies might be attended with a change which would operate the well-being of the Slaves; but how does the analogy of Hayti meet that part of the resolutions of Mr. Canning which couples the well-being of the Slaves with " *the interests of* " *private property?*" and how can any member of Parliament, bound, and religiously bound, to abide by the spirit of the resolutions moved by Mr. Canning, to which such member personally con-

sented, reconcile it to himself to bring forward the analogy of Hayti, as a proof that emancipation should take effect without adequate compensation? If it can be shown (which it can to demonstration,) that the change of the cultivation of an estate from sugar to any other sort of West Indian produce, having exchangeable value in Europe, requiring less labour, and soil of a different quality, is impracticable without ruin (as impracticable as it is for a Norfolk farmer to grow wheat with profit on the same land on which he did grow it with profit during certain periods of the war); it is really an appeal unworthy of the character of those who make it with apparent sincerity, to cite the state of Hayti as an imitable example of an early and unprogressive termination of slavery. All that is wanted to complete this part of the argument, and to show the little tendency that exists in Slaves, when made free, to pursue the cultivation of sugar, or even indigo (that is, of a production requiring steady continuous labour), will be furnished by a careful examination of the tabular statement to be found in Appendix A.

On the questions of the national advantage of maintaining the West Indian Colonies, whether Slave or free, of their past or present value, or of the loss or advantage incident to their possession, it is unnecessary to enter in this place;—not because the subject is not one of the utmost importance to the practical politician, but because it

is not necessarily connected with the practical question of West Indian Slavery, as arising out of the resolutions of the House of Commons in 1823.

It has already been shown that, whatever the Abolitionists of the present day may contemplate, the Abolitionists of 1807 contemplated slow and progressive emancipation, that their reasoning on that subject was sound and philosophical, and that the course best calculated to realize the views which they entertained, is that which has been adopted by the government in fulfilment of the resolutions of May, 1823*. It is now necessary to examine the question, whether compensation be due to the West Indian for his co-operation in the progress of this national experiment, and whether the most satisfactory principle of compensation be not already introduced into the Trinidad Order in Council.

In the voluminous protests that have been received from Trinidad on the subject of the Order in Council, and which have been printed and laid before Parliament, there is hardly any one point

* One of the most beneficial effects which the Order in Council has already produced in Trinidad has been, the general introduction of task work on the following principle. An average day's work is allotted to every Negro; and, at whatever time of the day he finishes that work, the remainder of the day is at his own disposal, whether for purposes of relaxation, or of employment, which may be benefical to himself personally.

in the order which it is not contended is calculated to depreciate property. The greater part of the clauses of that Order, however, contain enactments, the effect of which, whether taken separately or in the aggregate, cannot present a just claim for national compensation. The point at which the planter can be entitled to prefer a claim for compensation, is that where regulation of property ends, and where compulsory substitution of money for labour commences; that is, in other words, where a party is forced to part, for a money price, with that which he would wish to retain.

It is in vain to talk of the inconvenience arising from Slaves having a legal right to appeal to a Protector, to refer to the diminished work which the discontinuance of summary punishment in the field is calculated to produce, or to the consequences of the total abolition of female flogging. It is equally in vain to protest against the prohibition of compulsory Sunday labour, the necessity of keeping a record of punishments, the provisions for marriages of Slaves, the non-separation of families, the right of Slaves to property, the establishment of Savings Banks, the introduction of Slave evidence, or the duties of the Protector. These are not regulations of a nature to establish a claim for compensation. It may be admitted that, in the infancy of these regulations, some diminution of work may take place, which may operate to the

prejudice of the master; but the analogies of domestic legislation furnish innumerable instances of interference in the way of regulation in the limitation of the hours of work, and prescribing a certain quantity of food of both labourers and artisans, which were calculated, in the first instance, to prejudice the pecuniary interests of their employers, *but which had their compensating advantages in the improved condition of the labourers themselves.* It was in the nature of a compulsion to the capitalist to keep his machinery in good order. It is therefore, as already remarked, at the point where regulation of property ends, and where compulsory substitution of property commences, that compensation is to be considered.

It must be recollected that the Trinidad Order in Council was, in a certain sense, forced upon the inhabitants of Trinidad; they protested loudly against its principle and its enactments, as may be seen in the papers which have been printed and laid before the House of Commons. The inhabitants petitioned against it, the Cabildo petitioned against it, the Colonial Council remonstrated against it; and it is to be observed that these parties were loud in their expressions of their horror of slavery as a state, but contended that, *as their property was involved in its maintenance,* they could not consent, *without compensation,* to a series of measures which must have the effect of depreciating that property. His Majesty's Go-

vernment, however, executed their full and entire purpose, and the Order in Council, originally sent from this country, and subsequently moulded under instructions from Lord Bathurst, became the practical law of Trinidad.

In Demerara, however, the new Slave Code cannot be said to have been compulsorily enforced. The Court of Policy, a body somewhat anomalous in its nature, but executing practically certain judicial, legislative, and financial functions, was induced, under the strong recommendation of Lord Bathurst, to initiate the new Slave Code, instead of receiving it, as in Trinidad, as a compulsory measure enforced by the mother country. How far the probability of the consequences of refusal might have induced them to do this, is another question. Still it is of the highest conceivable importance, to have to show, as a precedent to the rest of the West Indies, the independent initiation, on the part of a constituted body in a Slave colony, of that new system of measures for the amelioration of the Slave population which were first introduced into the Trinidad Order in Council: and to the Court of Policy in Demerara, especially when the calamitous circumstances of the insurrection are considered, much credit is due for the course that they have taken.

The papers already laid before Parliament will show that the Court of Policy had, *with four ex-*

ceptions, imbodied the substance of all the clauses of the Trinidad Order in Council, with such modifications as local circumstances made necessary; and that it was their intention to promulgate a local law to that extent. Those four exceptions were, first, the marriage of Slaves; second, payment of wages to Slaves for work considered as Sunday work; third, possession of land by Slaves and the power of suing in court in their own names; fourth, the right of the Slave to purchase his own manumission.

It must be admitted that the necessity of issuing at home such an Order in Council will do away much of the advantage which the initiation of the law by the Court of Policy itself is calculated to produce within the colony,—an advantage to the principle of which the Abolitionists of 1807 were entirely consentient; and it will prevent the existence of a precedent of *a satisfactory code voluntarily adopted by a recognised body in the West Indies.* Such a code, as an example, would furnish the greatest practical facility in inducing the legislatures throughout the West Indies to take the same course of proceeding, and at once to carry into effect the purification of their own laws upon the subject, by the introduction of new and improved codes. It has been understood in Demerara, that the Court of Policy have not adhered to their objections in point of marriage; and it will be observed that the three remaining points of

Sunday wages, Slave property, and compulsory manumission under certain qualifications, are all susceptible of one simple explanation, namely, the dread of losing the means of profitably employing their capital in the culture of their plantations, if it should become the law of the colony that a Slave may at any time manumit himself or his relations upon the production of a sufficient price, to be assessed as directed in the Trinidad Order.

With respect to the point of Sunday wages, nothing can be more clear or consistent than the line which has been taken by the Government. Lord Bathurst has maintained (*vide* Letter to Sir Ralph Woodford) that the Slave is entitled to one day out of the seven for his own benefit and his own use, and, consequently, that the master is not entitled to compulsory labour from the Slave on that day. Particular exceptions of a palpable nature are made and recorded, such as domestic servants, &c., and the law enacts that all field-labour executed by the Slave on Sunday, or what is to be considered as Sunday, as well as all labour in the culture of sugar, or coffee, or cotton, if executed by the Slave, is to be remunerated by wages, to be assessed by the Protector.

The question, however, which is of the very essence of the whole, and may be considered as

the most vital question affecting the interests of the West Indies, is that of *the right of manumission independent of the will of the master.* And it is to be remembered, in arguing abstractedly on this subject without reference to compensation, that an argument which might prove that the planter of Barbadoes or Antigua would suffer very little under the operation of such a law, would not necessarily prove that the planter of Demerara or Jamaica would not be seriously injured by it. We must consider the remonstrances of the Demerara planter upon their own grounds, and not be led away by any generalization which will not stand the test of particular inquiry.

As a preliminary, however, to the examination of this part of the subject, it will be necessary to consider how the comparative merits of free and slave labour are estimated by what may be called the two conflicting parties of West Indians and Abolitionists. Not but that, in many instances, individuals on either side will be found to approximate very nearly in their opinions; but, in general, the two classes may be considered as diametrically opposed to each other.

The planters resident in the West Indies, very generally protest against ameliorating measures in themselves unobjectionable, from the apprehension that they have a tendency to supersede

a state of coerced labour, before a state of voluntary, that is, free labour, shall be sufficiently established to supply its place. But if it can be practically demonstrated that, should this contingency take place, *a just and equitable principle of compensation, with respect to this precise result, is to be found in the manumission clauses of the Trinidad Order, which they are called upon to adopt,* and if they shall be satisfied, from the practical nature of that proposed principle of compensation, that it will fairly meet the injury which they anticipate, *it is impossible to suppose that they will persevere in their opposition to its adoption.* The objections urged by the Court of Policy in Demerara to the clause of manumission are expressed in a note, p. 273, of the Parliamentary Papers, as follows:—

"The Court, in its anxiety to conform, as much "as possible, to the provisions of the Trinidad "Order, has, after the maturest consideration, "found itself called upon by its duty, to con-"fine its deliberations to the object of simplify-"ing the mode of manumission, and rendering it "as little expensive as possible, and particularly "of securing to the Slave thus manumitted his "freedom in the most formal and unquestionable "manner. It has felt it to be beyond its power, "without the breach of a sacred trust, which binds "its members to protect the rights and interests

" of their fellow-colonists, by whom they are no-
" minated for that purpose, to give their sanction
" to any measure which could, even by construc-
" tion, imply an acknowledged right on the part
" of the Slave to demand his freedom, *invito do-*
" *mino.* They feel themselves called upon openly
" to avow the principle, that they have not the
" right to invade the property of their fellow-colo-
" nists, by admitting that they can in any manner
" be deprived of it contrary to the law, by which
" it is secured to them, and which his Majesty
" has graciously been pleased to guarantee by the
" articles of capitulation, on which this Colony
" surrendered to his Majesty's arms. This prin-
" ciple is laid down in Earl Bathurst's letter of the
" 9th July, 1823, addressed to governors of colo-
" nies having local legislatures, wherein the *con-*
" *sent of the master* is distinctly coupled with the
" application to be made by or on the behalf of a
" Slave for freedom, and the Court has the more
" firmly adhered to the same principle, since
" the confirmation of it by Earl Bathurst in his
" despatch of 18th March, 1824, to Sir B. D'Ur-
" ban, wherein his lordship states that, as the
" Trinidad Order in Council has been framed ac-
" cording to the circumstances of the Spanish
" law, so his lordship desires the transmission
" of the draft of an Order in Council, applying
" the same provisions to the circumstances of the

" Dutch law in the colony of Demerara, The
" difference between the Spanish law in Trinidad
" and the Dutch law in Demerara, respecting
" Slave property, is great. The Trinidad Order
" in Council has not affected the principle of
" the Spanish law, which allows a Slave to en-
" franchise himself by purchase. The Dutch law
" in this colony gives no such right whatever
" to a Slave:—here the interest of an owner
" in his Slave is that of fee-simple absolute; he
" purchased upon that tenure, he has continued
" to hold upon the same, and cannot be deprived
" of that legal title without a direct violation of
" property, the law alone can deprive him of it in
" consequence of some judicial process by which
" he is compelled to surrender it in satisfaction of
" some debt. In Trinidad it is otherwise: a per-
" son purchasing a Slave in that colony knows be-
" forehand that he acquires only a precarious title
" in such a Slave, which depends on the ability
" of the Slave to purchase himself. But let the
" Spanish law be what it may, it can never alter
" the existing law of this colony; and it may
" fairly be inferred from Lord Bathurst's letter,
" that no subversion of the law is intended, and
" that it is far from the intention of his Majesty's
" government to annihilate in this colony the
" right of property, which is scrupulously held
" sacred throughout his Majesty's dominions.

" Slaves in this colony are chattels as much as
" any other moveable property, unless attached to
" a mortgaged property, and included in the mort-
" gage, when, during the existence of such mort-
" gage, they are considered as part of the whole
" property. In the latter case, the owner of such
" mortgaged estate cannot dismember his pro-
" perty piecemeal, but without such mortgage he
" has the entire control over his Slaves. Neither
" is it the law that proprietors can be forced to
" dispose of their property, real or personal, when
" its value is offered to them by others. To give
" to the Slave the right of purchasing himself
" against the will and consent of his owner, will
" annihilate the right of the owner, and confer
" on the Slave a power which no other person
" possesses.

" The ruinous effects of such a state of things
" could hardly be calculated in their full extent.
" All tradesmen, such as carpenters, masons,
" coopers, &c., having one or a few Slaves whom
" they have brought up to their trade, and with
" whom they earn their living, would be exposed
" to lose these Slaves, the more valuable to them,
" in proportion to the smallness of their number.
" Unprincipled persons might tamper with Slaves,
" furnish them, on certain conditions, with money,
" and entice them in this way from the service of
" their owner, with a view to employ them under

" an indenture, and in their new condition pro-
" bably ill-treat them; while the owner, who is
" deprived of them, sustains a loss which no
" money can repair: his trade is at a stand, or at
" least on the decline; he is obliged from want
" of employment sufficient to maintain his family,
" to spend for their support the money he has
" received for the Slaves thus forced from him;
" and, finally, he becomes a beggar, surrounded
" by a miserable family, without means to relieve
" them.

" The fate of the Planters would be equally
" distressing. It is fairly calculated that the
" average number of able effective people upon
" an estate is about one-third of the whole gang,
" the remaining two-thirds being composed of
" infants, who are a burden to the owner, and of
" the aged, who receive from him support. The
" parties most able to obtain their freedom are
" among the former, a class without whose as-
" sistance the proprietor would be unable to carry
" on the cultivation and management of his
" property. If the power to purchase freedom
" be absolutely vested in the Slave, free from all
" control on the part of the owner, the latter
" would hold the same by a precarious tenure,
" defeasible on the production of a sum of money,
" either by the Slave, or any other on his behalf.
" Boilers, tradesmen of every description, and

" others, who form the most useful and indispen-
" sable class, might thus be removed from the
" estate, to the irremediable detriment of the
" property, and consequent ruin of the owner, as
" the non-importation of Slaves renders the re-
" placing of such Slaves so manumitted a matter
" of impossibility. In progress of a short time, a
" most valuable estate might thus be rendered
" useless, for the want of able men, *cultivators* as
" well as tradesmen."

The answer to this remonstrance has not yet appeared in any printed papers. *If, however, the principle of compensation were not strictly involved in the compulsory manumission clauses in the Trinidad Order*, it might be contended, that there were great and substantial reasons for this remonstrance of the Demerara Court of Policy against those clauses. As a preliminary, however, to the consideration of the manner in which a principle of compensation, of the most satisfactory nature, appears to be involved in the Trinidad Order, it will be necessary to observe, that all claim to compensation must depend on the validity of the complaint made in the concluding passage of this remonstrance; and if the effect of compulsory manumission be to deprive the Planter of his means of cultivation, to the irremediable detriment of the property (as the remonstrance expresses), and to the consequent ruin of the owner, it is impossible for such owner

not to have a claim for compensation under Mr. Canning's resolutions. The question, then, is, Will the manumitted Slave be disposed to work for wages which can be afforded by the Master, without such a diminution of profit as will entitle him to a claim of compensation? That there are Slaves who will so work, I am not prepared to deny. Undoubtedly Slaves employed in any mechanical trades, not in themselves severely laborious, or in the discharge of domestic duties as servants, or in any sort of labour which does not involve the necessity of constant, steady exertion, under a tropical sun, may be found, when free, to work for such wages as the Master can fairly afford. But the greatest loss which the Planter could sustain, would be that of his best agricultural Slave; that is, of a Slave by whose labour his sugar cultivation is mainly carried on, and who is, by the terms of the proposition, a strong, able-bodied, free-working man. If the Planter could, by means of wages, induce such a Slave, when made free, to continue the same steady supply of labour which he received from him before his emancipation, and if those wages did not exceed the expense which is entailed upon the Master under the Slave system of maintaining the Slave and his family from infancy to death, *in that case, so far from suffering an injury in the event of compulsory manumission, even without price, he would receive a benefit*; as he would

be able to employ his capital without the insecurity inseparable from Slave property; and the same beneficial change which took place in Europe, and especially in England, and which matured the feudal villein into a free man, would take place with equal advantage in the West Indies. The extreme Abolitionist would not hesitate to assert, that it would so take place, and that there was no doubt but that the operation of *the principle of bettering his condition* would induce the manumitted Slave to work steadily and faithfully from day to day, and with physical powers rather increased than diminished, in his new state as a free man, having emerged from the degrading and depressing state of servitude.

The West Indian would, on the other hand, entirely assent, in the abstract, to the effect of that stimulus which *the desire of bettering his condition* is calculated to produce on the physical exertions of the labourer; but he would contend that the labourer himself must be, in all cases, left to judge as to what really is "*a bettering of his condition;*" and that, in the Torrid Zone, sugar-labour is so repugnant to the physical instinct of the black (while at the same time it is impossible to the white), that no sense of the advantages to be derived from the acquisition of property will ever induce the negro to undergo that labour, and thereby to abandon the luxury of repose; and he will refer to the very arguments of

the individual who is going to make a motion upon the subject in the course of the present session, in confirmation of this unchangeable principle. Mr. Brougham, in his "Colonial Policy," borrowing most of his opinions from M. Malouet, Minister of Marine and Colonies under the French government, has enforced this part of the argument in detail, and with a force of illustration which would make it utterly impossible for him ever to contradict such opinions, however he may qualify them. The West Indian will then proceed to assert, that sugar-labour demands a regular unintermitting exertion from day to day, during the course of the cultivation and crop; and, that, as the interests of the majority of the West India body are involved in the cultivation of sugar, *and of sugar only*, ruin must ensue if that cultivation cannot be carried on under a system of wages, as well as under a system of Slavery. He will also explain that the transmutation of a sugar estate, with all its machinery and buildings, into an estate upon which it is intended to cultivate other produce yielding equal profit to the proprietor, is neither more nor less than impracticable.

Hitherto the arguments that might be used by the West Indians generally have been adverted to; but the Planter in Demerara would have a still stronger case. He would say, that it must be admitted, that the same principle which re-

gulates the amount of wages in other countries in the world will be found to operate in Demerara, according to the peculiar circumstances of that Colony.

In illustration of what must necessarily be more or less, a scientific proposition, a passage may be quoted from a very valuable treatise of Colonel Torrens, which has been specially alluded to by the late Mr. Ricardo, in the third edition of his "Principles of Political Economy," page 91, as containing, in a condensed form, the true principles upon this subject,—principles, in fact, which are not denied by any writer whatsoever.

"The proper way of regarding labour, is, as a "commodity in the market. It therefore has, as "well as every thing else, its market price, and "its natural price. The market price of labour is "regulated by the proportion which, at any time, "and any place, may exist between the demand "and the supply:—its natural price is governed "by other laws, and consists in such a quantity "of the necessaries and comforts of life, *as, from "the nature of the climate, and the habits of the country,* "are necessary to support the labourer, and to "enable him to rear such a family as may pre-"serve in the market an undiminished supply "of labour. That the labourer must usually "obtain for his work a sufficient quantity of "those things which the climate may render "necessary to preserve himself and such a fa-

" mily as may keep up the supply of labour to
" the demand in healthful existence, is self-
" evident, and when we consider that things not
" originally necessary to healthful existence, often
" become so from use, and that men will be de-
" terred from marriage, unless they have a pro-
" spect of rearing their families in the mode of
" living to which they have been accustomed, it
" is obvious that the labourer must obtain for
" his work *not only what the climate may render ne-*
" *cessary, but what the habits of the country, operating*
" *as a second nature, may require.* From this ac-
" count of the natural price of labour, it is evident
" that it may be liable to very considerable va-
" riations. The shelter and the clothing which
" are indispensable in one country, may be nowise
" necessary in another; and a labourer in Hin-
" dostan may continue to work with perfect
" vigour, though receiving, as his natural wages,
" only such a supply of covering as would be in-
" sufficient to preserve a labourer in Russia from
" perishing. Even in countries situated in the
" same climate, different habits of living will
" often occasion variations in the natural price of
" labour, as considerable as those which are pro-
" duced by natural causes. Alterations, however,
" in the natural price of labour cannot be sud-
" denly effected. *That part of this price which de-*
" *pends upon climate is unchangeable;* and even the
" part that is determined by the habits of living,

" and the prudential check which may exist with
" respect to marriage, can be affected only by
" those circumstances of prosperity or decay, and
" by those moral causes of instruction and ci-
" vilization, which are ever gradual in their opera-
" tion. The natural price of labour, therefore,
" though it varies under different climates, and
" with the different stages of national improve-
" ment, may, in any given time and place, be re-
" garded as very nearly stationary. While the
" natural price of labour is thus steady, its market
" price, as has been already observed, fluctuates
" perpetually, according to the proportion of its
" supply in the market. The price which labour
" fetches in the market may often be considerably
" more, and often considerably less, than that
" which, from the climate and habits of living,
" is necessary to maintain the labourer and his
" family. But notwithstanding those occasional
" variations, the natural and the market price of
" labour have a mutual influence on each other,
" and cannot long be separated."

If these principles, so clearly laid down, be admitted to be sound and unanswerable, how will they apply to Demerara, under the admitted circumstances of the extraordinary fertility of that country, where not one-thousandth part of the most fertile land in the country is occupied,—where a population, a thousand times as great as its actual population, could be sustained from the

products of the soil without inconvenience? It necessarily follows, that the natural wages of labour must be low in such a country; and so far it might appear that the Planter would not be prejudiced by the change from slavery to freedom, inasmuch as he would not be called upon to give other than low wages. But could he induce the Slave, made free, to work for those wages? If not, he must raise them, in order to induce him to work. But it must be remembered, that there is a limitation in the extent to which he could raise them. Any rate of wages, given to a Slave made free, which would materially exceed the expense now averagely incurred under the Slave system for the entire support of an individual working Slave, could not be afforded by the Master. To this expense would be superadded the interest of the money paid for his manumission; but beyond that limit he could not go, without a palpable diminution of his profits. Nor could he proceed with his cultivation *at all*, if the rate of wages materially exceeded that amount which he would gain by the price of the manumission, and by his exemption from future expense by the support of the Slave. Other countries, where the Slave system was in force, or where density of population, encroaching on the means of subsistence, compelled the labourer to work, as the only means of acquiring a subsistence would undersell him in the market of the world.

A consideration of the circumstances in which the black labourer in Demerara will be placed when free, will leave little doubt as to the degree of augmentation of wages which will be necessary to bribe him to exertion, *if, indeed, any considerable increase would be certain to accomplish that purpose;* and it could easily be shewn that the master could not *afford* to offer that temptation, that is, to pay such wages, in his character of a producer of sugar.

A free black has only to settle himself where he pleases within the colony of Demerara, he has only to retire up the river, a few miles back from the extreme margin of the very small portion of occupied ground, where he will find space enough for many thousand times the existing slave population of that colony to spread themselves and their descendants, without any serious obstacle being opposed to them by the scattered aborigines of the country; he will there, on his new location, be able to obtain, by the strenuous exertion of one single day, enough to satisfy all his natural and artificial wants for the space of a week. In addition, he will have the resources of the river and the woods for the supply of fish and game; and he will enjoy that state which all men agree is the state most congenial to the human being in tropical climates—that of repose. And yet, under these circumstances, the Abolitionist unhesitatingly pronounces that he will be forth-

coming as a free and willing servant, to execute the purposes of his master for moderate and reasonable wages. The question is, which opinion is the most correct, the affirmation or the negation of that proposition? And it must be remembered that if the negative be the true opinion, the ruin of the master is, under these given circumstances, involved in the compulsory manumission of his slaves without practical compensation, inasmuch *as he cannot replace their labour by any conceivable means.* The white population cannot execute the work, on account of the effect of the climate upon their physical constitutions:—the Abolition Act prevents the introduction of African Slaves; and the same causes which it is here contended would be likely to operate upon the Demerara Slave "made free," would operate in a tenfold ratio upon the free African black, if such a class could be introduced into the colony. It might, however, be observed, that all these anticipated consequences might be prevented if a law were to be passed, appropriating all the land in the colony to the use of the crown, for example, and effectually preventing the self-location of the free black in the manner detailed.—Undoubtedly, such a law could be passed; but the question is, could it be enforced? Would it not be contrary to the principles of justice, and above all, be utterly incompatible with the term *freedom?* In addition to which, and to show the fallacy (if it

were necessary) of such a mode of prevention, the black, now free, has only to cross a creek of the width of a street, when he finds himself in the territory of Columbia, where slavery has ceased by law to exist.

It may not be inconvenient to illustrate these observations by a reference to the circumstances of India and of Surinam; and first of India.—It is contended that, because sugar is produced by free labourers in India, it follows as an inevitable consequence, that it could be produced by free labourers in the West Indies; and probably more inconsistency has been vented on this subject than upon any other which has occupied the attention of political economists. India has a population dense in the extreme,—she has little or no unoccupied land of the first class of fertility,—and her capital, however large in the aggregate, is extremely small in proportion to the extent of space, and to the density of population, upon which it is employed. Demerara, on the contrary, has a population bearing no proportion to her territory,—she has incalculable quantities of unoccupied land of the first class of fertility; and she has a large capital employed upon a very small space, which arises from the extraordinary fertility of her soil. And yet, notwithstanding these distinctions between the two countries, marked by the hand of Providence, the same reasoning is made to apply to both, and it is con-

tended that, because a Hindoo will work at agricultural labour for wages, a Demerara free black will necessarily do the same. The Hindoo labourer only receives three half-pence per day; and why are his wages so low? because his employer knows that, if the labourer does not choose to work for that sum, he has no alternative but comparative starvation; there is no waste land, that he can cultivate with profit—no waste land, from the cultivation of which he himself can derive greater advantage than he would do as a labourer receiving wages; and so cheap are his food and his clothing, that the sum of three half-pence per day is sufficient for the purpose of providing them. If it were possible to suppose that the climate of India were to become more cold, and the soil less favourable to the production of rice, the money-price of labour (that is wages) must rise, or the people would actually perish; and this is the key to the principle of those desolating famines which have so often been recorded in Indian history.

In Surinam, there are settlements of free blacks in the back country, to the number of thirty or forty thousand, as they have been estimated by some writers, but which are represented as not containing more than sixteen or twenty thousand, by persons who have visited them at later periods. These blacks appear to continue at the lowest state of civilization, and verify all the prin-

ciples which might otherwise be pronounced *theoretical;* and it would not be too much to prophesy that they will remain more or less in that state, until either education and religious instruction shall raise them in their own estimation, and prepare them for the acquirement of more than the mere physical sustenance of life, or until their increasing population, or any encroachment upon the territory which they inhabit, shall impose upon them greater difficulty in providing themselves with means of average subsistence.

" On connoit (says M. Malouet) * l'établissement de négres " libres à Surinam. Lors de mon voyage dans cette colonie, " leur chefs vinrent me visiter; ils vouloient réclamer mon " intercession auprès du Gouvernement Hollandois, pour l'exé- " cution de quelques articles de leur traité; et je profitai de " toutes les facilités que cette circonstance me procuroit, pour " m'informer dans le plus grand détail de leur situation, de " leurs mœurs, commerce, culture, et police. Ils ne manquent " d'aucun des moyens d'exercer dans leurs villages nos arts " mecaniques; ils ont parmi eux, des ouvriers de toute les " professions, échappés, comme les autres, des ateliers Hollan- " dais, et devenues libres par un traité fait les armes à la main. " Ils auroient même le plus grand intérêt à conserver au moins " l'espèce d'industrie nécessaire à leur défence et à l'accroisse- " ment de leurs forces. On croiroit qu'ils ont dû désirer se " mettre en état de se forger des armes, ou de réparer celles " dont ils se pourvoient par des échanges, et qu'ayant tous " connu les commodités, les jouissances de luxe, si précieuses " aux Européens, l'espoir d'y parvenir seroit pour eux un

* Memoires sur les Colonies, tome v. p. 121.

" motif de travail; mais le repos, l'oisiveté, sont devenues, " dans leur état social, leur unique passion. Leur culture, " bornée à l'absolu nécessaire, les expose à d'affreuses disettes: " la chasse et la pêche sont alors leur seul ressource.—Repous- " sant constamment les missions religieuses, et toute occasion " de relation avec les blancs, ils ont préféré, pour s'assurer des " armes et quelques utensiles, de se constituter, par un traité, " gardes et géoliers de leurs camarades esclaves, qu'ils arrêtent " et revendent aux Hollandais, quand les déserteurs viennent " leur demander asile, ou qu'ils les surprennent dans les bois. " Leur police consiste, comme en Afrique, dans l'autorité ab- " solu d'un chef, que la multitude fait périr ou dépose quand " elle en est mécontente. Etablis à trente lieues des quartiers " habités par les Hollandais, ils ne veulent ni rapprochement, " ni commerce, ni d'autre travail, ni d'autres mœurs et coutumes " que celles de leur pays natal; et ils se maintiennent dans " ces principes avec la plus persévérante obstination."

How, then, any unprejudiced person can assert that "*the tendency of mankind to better themselves* " *is a sufficient security for their labour*," and maintain that proposition as an axiom *universally true, without qualification or consideration of climate and circumstance*, is not easy to guess; and yet it is maintained in the most formal manner, in the last publication of the Anti-Slavery Society. It is there asserted that, if the position were true, that " Slavery in the West Indies is a better *and more* " *gainful* condition of society than freedom," it would be an arraignment " of the moral govern- " ment of God."

No one would hesitate to admit that, to maintain that " Slavery, abstractedly considered, is a

" *better* or more *natural* state of society than free-
" dom," would be to maintain a most irrational, absurd, and culpable opinion; but to contend that free labour in the West Indies is more profitable than Slave labour, and to assert that Slavery can be abolished there, *with benefit to the Proprietors of Slaves*, without that slow and progressive process of transmutation, which has characterized all similar changes recorded in history which have been *beneficial in their result*, is to maintain an opinion which savours more of passion and prejudice than of cool and dispassionate reasoning.

The West Indians, in their claim for compensation, challenge the whole world to produce a single satisfactory precedent, where a similar ratio exists between population, capital, and space, of Slaves, in any numbers, who have been made free, executing the necessary duties of tropical sugar labour for wages, or for any other consideration that could be supplied by the master, consistently with the maintenance of his necessary and average profits; and those who are reasonable amongst them are prepared to relax all their claims for compensation, and all their objections to manumission, if a precedent could be produced, so as fairly to demonstrate *even the probability of such a result.* In this country, where the advantages of property are so well appreciated, artificers, who receive very high

wages, and who can live very comfortably on the wages of three days per week, are very often found to pass the other three days in idleness, rather than employ them for the increase of their property, which increase necessarily involves "*the bettering of their condition;*" that is, in other words, they prefer present enjoyment to the acquisition of property, even when the inconvenience incurred by such exertion is incalculably less than that which is felt by the labourer in a tropical climate. In fact, the objection to manumission rests upon the uncertainty of obtaining that supply of labour which is necessary for the cultivation of their estates, and the absence of which must involve them in one common ruin. In reasoning thus upon general principles, there may be many exceptions; it is sufficient that the general reasoning be in itself correct and unanswerable.

The preceding observations, it is hoped, have sufficiently established the justice of a principle of compensation. It yet remains to be considered whether that principle be not unequivocally included in the manumission clauses of the Trinidad order. Those clauses provide that, where the master and the Slave cannot agree upon the terms of manumission, one appraiser shall be appointed by the Owner, another by the Protector, and an umpire by the Chief Judge, who shall value the Slave, and on the payment of the

appraised value into the treasury, such Slave shall be manumitted. But it does not appear upon what principle such value shall be assessed. In the preceding argument, an endeavour has been made to show that the real value of a Slave to his master must depend upon the facility or impossibility of substituting free labour for the labour of such Slave. Consequently, if the value of the Slave be determined upon the only equitable principle which appears to belong to the transaction, namely, the deterioration of the property of the master, the price of such Slave must carry with it the most equitable principle of compensation. In every special instance the appraisers will necessarily have to consider and to estimate the loss to the master. That loss will be measured by a comparison between the profit which the labour of that Slave produced to his master, after deducting the expense of his maintenance, and the profit which the master will derive from the labour of a free black, after deducting the wages which it will be necessary to give, in order to induce such free black to execute the duties previously performed by that Slave; and the price will be raised or depressed accordingly, under a rigid application of this principle. The case in which there will be the highest amount of compensation will be that in which the services of the Slave can neither be replaced by the purchase of another Slave within the colony (the only opportunity for

such purchase permitted by law), or by the services of a free black labourer; and in that case, the principle of compensation will extend to a definite proportion of the property of the planter, who will be obliged to throw out of cultivation part of that soil, which, from its extent and fertility, is a mere drug, (as is the case in Demerara), but from which he is incapable of deriving any adequate advantage, except through the instrumentality of labour. But in such a supposed case, if the ground will admit of being employed for other purposes than that of the production of sugar, producing a certain, though a diminished rate of profit, the difference between such diminished profit and that which he derived from sugar cultivation, will be the measure of the price of his Slave. In the opposite case, the Planter will receive little or nothing for his Slave. If it can be shewn that he can substitute free-labour for slave-labour with any proportionate profit, he has not any pretext for any compensation; but it is time, and time only that can dispose of this question; and if this experiment be pressed on before circumstances have provided a fund of free-labour, and if the Planter be called upon, under this clause, to part with a Slave, for whose services he cannot find a substitution, in that case, as already observed, the price of the Slave must be the price of a definite proportion of the estate of

the Planter, including his capital. Nor can the extreme Abolitionist complain with justice, that the price will be so inordinate as to frustrate the purposes of the enactment; for he will contend that free-labour will supply the place of slave-labour, with infinitely greater benefit both to the Planter and to the Slave. There is no human being possessed of proper feeling, who will not sincerely wish that this prediction may be verified; and if it be verified, the price of the manumission of the Slave, as already explained, will and ought to be little more than nominal. Who is there in this country who would exchange the paid services of a free-labour for the services of a Slave, if it were possible to suppose that the transaction would be legal? The most sensitive Abolitionist may be assured that the best interests of the Planter would induce him, under similar circumstances, to prefer free-labour to slave-labour, whatever may be his conduct, his speeches, or his protests against any change in the condition of Slavery. The supposition that the price of the Slave will include a definite proportion of the value of the Planter's estate, is founded in the presumed fact that the Planter cannot purchase another Slave—that he cannot purchase another labourer—that his land is a drug. If, then, he has a property of a hundred Slaves, their value must be estimated in a ratio according to their relative powers and capacities; and the loss to the Master

if one Slave were taken from a gang of a hundred, would not be the loss of a hundredth proportion of his property, but of the value of that Slave with reference to the whole of his property. Let us suppose that, under this clause, a Slave demands his manumission,—that he has proofs of industry to warrant that demand,—and that he is prepared, from private sources, with adequate means for paying the price of his manumission. If a price which can command a Slave *equally good* be given to the Planter, he is precisely in the same condition as before. Under that supposition, he receives in fact no money; since the money paid by the manumitted Slave is immediately laid out in the purchase of another Slave. If such a Slave be not forthcoming, and he can only procure an *inferior Slave*, he will have the services of that inferior Slave, and a money price representing the difference. If *no Slave* whatever can be bought, he will have a money price calculated with reference to his being able, by means of wages, to obtain from a freeman, that labour which he had previously received from the Slave; and if the Slave so manumitted, or any other free labourer, will work for those wages, no injury will be sustained by the master; but if the master *can neither purchase a Slave nor obtain free-labour*, his compensation for the loss of the manumitted Slave ought to be, as before observed, a definite proportion of the value of the estate as a Sugar

Plantation, deducting its value for any other available purpose of cultivation. It is between the two extremes—absolute compensation where no free-labour *can* be substituted, and the absence of all compensation in consequence of the ready substitution of free-labour—that *the various means will* be struck, which will regulate the practical execution of this clause.—There may be colonies in the West Indies, where the effect of this principle will not be to raise the price, inasmuch as local circumstances will compel the manumitted Slave, from the want of subsistence, to work as a free labourer; but even this will be an operation of time. Can any man, then, in fairness contend that the price of the Slave is to be formed on one general average? Can any one hesitate to allow that if the interests of property are to be preserved, the price must be regulated by the injury sustained by the master in the loss of the Slave, rather than by the abstract value of the labour of the Slave taken on a general average?

If it be suggested as an objection, that the Planter may lose a Slave, whose skill in a particular employment, and acquaintance with the circumstances of the estate, may render the loss of his services irreparable by the substitution of the labour of a stranger,—the answer is, that the Planter must endeavour to train up, among his own Slaves, a succession of persons who may be ready to replace any such valuable men, whenever

they may be abstracted from the estate under the operation of this clause.

The purchase of children is not inconsistent with the principles which have been explained. The Slave child, in the earlier years of its existence, is necessarily a source of expense, and not of profit to the Planter. It is his future labour which is to compensate to the Planter for the expense of his maintenance and support. If, therefore, an adequate price be offered in the extreme infancy of the child, there is no reason why the Planter should object to receive the money, more than in the case of a Slave of mature age. If it were enacted that, independently of the price so received, the Slave child should be brought up by the Planter, and apprenticed for a period of years, during which his labour, not as a Slave, but as a coerced Freeman, should compensate for the expense of his support,—the price paid would be a remuneration to the Planter, for having dispossessed himself of his right to the contingent services of that Slave child at the period of the maturity of its strength, and of the interest which he had in its posterity. It will be observed that, under such a system of purchase, although the operation would necessarily be more slow, the price for the emancipation of the individual would be less; and the apprenticeship of the child, thus made free, would be the best preparation for his future industry as a Freeman. This, on examina-

tion, will be found to be nothing more than the principle of purchasing a reversion, in which a smaller price is paid than would be paid at a future period. Practical difficulties may be found or pointed out in the details of a measure founded on these principles; but the question here again presents itself.—Can any plan of emancipation be suggested, involving a more sound or a *more* certain principle of compensation?

It may be argued, indeed, that this principle will be unpopular, both with *some* Abolitionists and with *some* Planters, but it will be so, only with those Abolitionists who contend that emancipation should be instantaneous, and with those Planters who contend that manumissions should never be compulsory.

If it be argued that unless free labour can be immediately substituted for slave labour, the purpose of the manumission clause will be frustrated, inasmuch as no Slave will ever be able to work out his own freedom under the accession of price which will take place, the answer is, that *it is for this country, if it be sincere in its anxiety to put an end to Slavery, to lend pecuniary assistance to such Slaves for the accomplishment of that purpose.* Such pecuniary assistance may be conveniently regulated with reference to the industry and good conduct of Slaves who may have partial means for their own manumission, in other words, to the proof which they have given of a disposition

to execute, as free labourers, the duties of steady and continuous industry; but the principle, in any conceivable case, is perfectly sound. The master will receive a compensation for his loss. *If the Slave be not manumitted, the clause is a dead letter.* If he be manumitted, it is the soundest principle on which compensation can operate. It is sound, because it is special and not general. It is sound, because it is progressive and not simultaneous. It is sound, because the earlier experiments will give the best commentary upon the means of carrying into effect the resolutions of the House of Commons. It is sound, because it will give the fairest opportunity of solving the intricate and serious problem of superseding a state of Slavery by a state of freedom, without ruin or revulsion either to the master or to the Slave.

If a patient examination be made of all the protests and proceedings of the West Indians, whether in legislative enactments, in colonial debates, or in private publications, since the resolutions proposed by Mr. Canning were passed in May, 1823, it will be apparent that their resistance to the meliorating measures suggested by the government is founded on the following principle. They contend that those resolutions not only contemplated, but sanctioned, "an equitable consideration of the interests of private property." They believe, or rather they have been induced to believe, that the government, from want of due consideration, have suggested measures of melio-

ration, which, if carried into effect, would materially trench upon those interests. They have not heard the word *compensation* ever pronounced in Parliament, and they *most erroneously* suppose that a principle of compensation has not been secured; whereas the most equitable principle of compensation has already (as the preceding observations have endeavoured to establish) been supplied in the clauses of the Trinidad Order in Council, which regulates the principle of manumission. Against that clause they have repeated the most constant and inveterate protests, expressed with too much apparent sincerity, to allow it to be supposed *that they have not misconstrued its tenor and effect.* It would appear, therefore, but just that, as a preliminary to any measures partaking even of the nature of direct authority, the tendency and bearing of the regulations suggested for their adoption should be still more fully and definitively explained to them. Not that it is to be understood that no advance has been made towards the embodying the clauses of the Trinidad Order in the statute-books of some of the colonies. The extent to which this has taken place, it is presumed, will be made public, if papers of the same description as those of the last year should again be laid before Parliament.

If, however, it be expedient to give this advice to the West Indian colonist, it is not the less expedient to counsel the extreme Abolitionist. Let

the solemn pledge of Parliament be fulfilled; let the colonial laws be amended;—let the obsolete and inapposite enactments be struck out of their codes;—let the administration of justice be improved in regulation and in practice;—let education and religion combine to raise the Negro in the scale of being, and prepare him for that new course of existence through which *he must pass* before he can be duly prepared for unqualified freedom;—let the history of the infant liberty of our own country instruct, with cautious analogy, the regulators of this new experiment in the Western World;—but let not an abstract detestation of slavery as a state operate to press on, with unnatural haste, a change which time, and time alone, can make effectual;—and let not another experiment be added, in our own times, to that of the French Revolution, of attempting to mould theories in a moment into a practical shape, and of supposing that the image thus created will have the consistency and duration of matured and progressive effort.

It is equally unfortunate for the interests of humanity and of West Indian property, that certain prejudices should be so unfortunately rooted in the minds of the members of the colonial legislatures in the West Indies; and undoubtedly, when the historian of some future day shall contemplate the transactions of the present times with that comparative dispassionateness which

belongs to the history of a former period, as contrasted with the speculations of the existing moment, he will protest, in the strongest terms, against these prejudices, and it will be fortunate if he have not to record the evils which have arisen from them.

The first and the most prominent of those prejudices is, the indisposition which exists to accommodate the local law to the local practice of the day, and a determination to retain in the Colonial Statute-book those severe and cruel laws, which, though severe and cruel, were absolutely necessary, as long as continued importations of Slaves were annually introduced into the West Indies. Those importations made it necessary that a sort of rigorous and summary state of martial law should be in perpetual action, for the security and even existence of the white population. Such laws, however, are, at the present moment, practically inoperative; and why, therefore, should any hesitation be felt in repealing them? Let a contrast be made between the Creole Slave and the Slave just escaped from the horrors of the middle passage, under which many of his friends and even relations may have sunk, condemned to perpetual labour, instead of enjoying a passive and indolent existence in his own country, where he was content to

> Bask in the glare, or stem the tepid wave,
> And thank the gods for all the goods they gave.

If the habitual and necessary frame of mind of such a Slave be compared with that of a Creole Negro, born, or at least bred upon the estate, or having his former acuteness of feeling neutralized by a second nature, that is, by the habit of twenty years, is it possible to suppose that the same code of laws which were suited for the coercion of the one, can be necessary for the regulation of the other? *And if the West Indian legislatures would only adopt as law that which the lapse of time has progressively established in custom,* they would at once exempt themselves from those charges which, instead of losing by repetition, necessarily become more and more invidious in their cumulative character.

Another prejudice which pervades the local legislatures is, their indisposition to recognise, even progressively, the claims of the free coloured population; and nothing would more strongly excite surprise, if the tendency of small communities to confirm and perpetuate prejudice were not correctly appreciated, than to find men of intelligence and information, prepared to maintain that, although individuals belonging to the free coloured race may have received the advantages of liberal education, and may possess the power which property gives for the developement of those advantages, yet neither education nor property ought ever to entitle such men to any privileges enjoyed by the whites,

Nothing can be more natural, if not justifiable, than the repugnance of the whites in the West Indies, to admit to all the privileges of the whites free persons of colour, who have not those qualifications for such admission; but to suppose that persons of education and property can be subjected to perpetual exclusion, and that the experiment even of progressive privileges is to be withheld from them, is to suppose that those immutable laws which establish the principles by which human society is held together can be violated with impunity.

But, however just the opinion of the impolicy of these prejudices may be—however urgent the effort ought to be to diminish and obliterate them, it must not be supposed that their existence is confined to England and her colonies alone. An Act has just passed the legislature of the State of South Carolina amending the law which *already prohibits* the introduction of persons of colour into that state; and a clause in the amended Act runs thus:—" On the arrival of packets and all other " vessels having on board any coloured persons, " the sheriff of the district shall repair on board " the vessel, and order the captain to remove his " vessel into the stream, at the distance of not " less than 150 yards from the wharf, and to load " and unload the same by lighters, under the pe- " nalty of not less than one thousand dollars for " refusal or non-compliance."—It must not be

forgotten that this apprehension of moral contagion arising from the introduction of free people of colour into a Slave state, at the close of the year 1825, is found in a country where there is a white population of above eight millions.

The indisposition of some of the local legislatures to sanction the reception of Slave evidence, is another instance of prejudice which is much to be regretted. Yet, although these prejudices may be found to exist, and may be lamented when found, it must not be understood that it will be necessary, without pausing, to enforce summary measures, which will only aggravate, instead of palliating the evil, or that it may not be more expedient to apply the slow, but sure, moral power of reason and argument. But, however strong these prejudices, if the accusation, that "the often-repeated and "often-refuted pretence of actual improvements" in the West Indies, "is all delusion," be (as many West Indians, of the first character for honour and integrity, maintain it to be) an *unfounded accusation*,—it must be allowed that the Colonists have some cause for provocation. It certainly is to be regretted that the truth with respect to this accusation cannot be ascertained, *as it is one manifestly susceptible of proof or contradiction.* At the same time it must be remarked, that the Abolitionists do flagrant injustice to their cause, in dwelling so heavily on the subject of the op-

pression incident to Slavery, because such a course would seem to imply that if the oppressive and cruel part of the system were abolished, the evils of slavery, as a system, would be effectually removed. If the most efficient Protectors of Slaves were established in each colony, and if it were enacted in each colony that no Slaves, male or female, should ever again be subjected to any degree of exertion incompatible with the preservation of the best possible health, or with habits of education and moral conduct, would the Abolitionists be content to allow the continuance of slavery as a state, subject to this important melioration? In other words, will they sanction a state of regulated coercion, as an intermediate state between slavery and freedom? If they will not, why do they lay such a constant stress on this part of the subject, which is calculated so essentially to goad and wound the feelings of the colonists, especially of that far greater proportion of them who are conscious that, with respect to themselves and to their management of their Slaves, the accusations of cruelty and oppression are utterly unmerited? That eight hundred thousand individuals can be held in slavery, without occasional acts of severity, is a moral impossibility; but the inference is not correct, that, because these evils are inseparable from the system, they are universal, or even general in their application.

The West Indians contend, with entire con-

fidence, and challenge inquiry, in the most peremptory manner, as to the fact—that not only are the Negroes better fed and more mildly treated, but that they are benefited in "innumerable other particulars, which" (to use the words of Mr. Wilberforce, quoted in page 29) "an act of Assembly could neither specify nor "enforce." On the other hand, much misconception exists on this subject among some of the members of the West India body. Some of them imagine, that the Order in Council for Trinidad was founded upon an impression that the state of Slavery in the West Indies was universally a state of misery and privation. They contend, that if that impression were removed, there would be no pretext for the adoption of the provisions contained in that order; and therefore they recommend the most extensive and conclusive inquiry into the physical state of the Negroes, *for that object.* But in this point of view, they confound the physical with the moral condition of the Slaves. With respect to their physical condition, it may be true that they are, in general, not only better fed and more mildly treated, but benefited in "innumerable other particulars," &c. &c. But if this were admitted, to the utmost extent, it would afford no argument against the measures which have been adopted in execution of the Resolutions of the House of Commons. Those Resolutions contemplated "that *progressive im-*

"*provement in the character of the Slave Population,*" which might "*prepare them for a participation in* "*those civil rights and privileges which are enjoyed* "*by other classes of His Majesty's subjects:*" and how is it possible to suppose that, if the fact were established that the Slaves are well fed, well clothed, well housed, and kindly treated, that there would be no necessity for *preparing them* for that state of freedom which the Resolutions propose that they should be fitted ultimately to enjoy? Admitting that the Slaves are in the best possible physical condition, why is it less expedient to adopt the suggestions in the Trinidad Order in Council? Why, because they are well fed, well clothed, well housed, and kindly treated, is it inexpedient to appoint a Protector—to limit, and ultimately to supersede, Sunday markets; to prohibit their labouring on Sunday for the exclusive benefit of their masters? Why is it inexpedient, under these circumstances, to forbid the carrying of the whip into the field; to regulate the punishment of males; and to substitute certain punishments for females, in lieu of those which previously existed? Why is it inexpedient to keep a record of punishments; to enact penalties for illegal punishment; to provide for the marriage of Slaves; to prohibit the separation of families; to establish the right of Slaves to property; to institute savings-banks; to regulate manumissions (taking care to secure to the owner the

real value of his Slave); or, finally, to regulate the circumstances under which a Slave shall be entitled to give evidence on oath in a court of justice? He must be an ingenious person, who would be able to convince the country that these improvements, which are enforced in the Trinidad Order, are unnecessary and inexpedient, by proving the falsehood of the accusations so liberally made, *that the Negroes are badly fed, badly clothed, badly housed, and badly treated.* However, as the appeals made by the Abolitionists to the people, rest materially on the assertion of the misery and privation at this moment experienced by the Negroes, it certainly would be desirable, if it were possible, that such conclusive evidence were brought, either in support or in contradiction of that assertion, as would no longer leave this part of the question in doubt; which doubt, at this period, operates so invidiously and prejudicially against the West India body.

Too strong a protest cannot be entered against any attempt which may be made to wrest from the hands of the Government this great national experiment, founded in justice, and executed hitherto in a spirit of practical and cautious policy, by appeals made to the people against slavery as a system (the truth of which, in the abstract, no person can be found to deny), and by engendering those feelings of horror

and indignation which such appeals are calculated to produce; and too much caution cannot be recommended to those candidates at the next general election, whom it may be attempted to involve in pledges and promises upon this subject, *from which their better judgment will revolt*, when they are called to fulfil them.

The Abolitionists accuse the Planters of severity and unkindness towards their Slaves, and of the exercise of unnecessary coercise authority. That there have been recorded examples of such severity, no person can deny: and that such instances are inseparable from a state of Slavery, it might not be difficult to shew, even in default of recorded examples. But it is impossible to deny that the severity of the Planter has progressively diminished, in proportion as the Slave has advanced from the state of an indignant and rebellious captive, to that of a domiciliated and tranquil bondsman: and even admitting that wherever Slavery exists, severity must be found, is it not demonstrable that the principle by which that severity may be effectually mitigated and ultimately destroyed, is the elevation and improvement of the moral condition of the Slave? If unnecessary severity exist in the West Indies at this moment, it must be remembered that it is the child of the legislation of our own country. We have fostered, encouraged, and maintained,

in every conceivable manner, the establishment of a state, of which severity and coercion have been indispensable conditions*.

"He who allows oppression, shares the crime."

* This statement may be illustrated by the following Extract from Mr. Barham's Pamphlet, entitled "*Consideration on the Abolition of Negro Slavery, and the means of practically effecting it.*"

"But is it really so as we have affirmed, that the people of Great Britain are equally liable for the debt. We would now pay to humanity and justice, as the inhabitants of the Colonies and the owners of colonial property? the question is most important; and before it can be safely answered, we must inquire how this debt arose, and for whose benefit it was contracted?

"That debt arose by the Slave Trade; and that trade was established by, and for the benefit of, the nation at large.

"To say that Great Britain formed the plan, and that the Colonies executed it—to say, that Great Britain made the laws, and that the Colonies availed themselves of the laws—would be greatly understating the share, which Great Britain had in the origin of the Slave Trade, and in the consequent system of Slavery that now exists. But many persons have been so used to charge all the odium of that system on those, who by accident happen to be the present owners of Slaves, that they will be surprised to learn how much larger a share Great Britain has had than the Colonies, in the formation, maintenance, and present extent of slavery.

"The following historical facts will clear up this point a little.

"Great Britain established the Slave Trade in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, who personally took a share in it.	"The Colonies did not then exist.

The only course, therefore, to be pursued by this country, is the adoption of such practical measures

"Great Britain encouraged it in the successive reigns of Charles I., Charles II., and James II. by every means that could be devised. But is was William III. who outdid them all. With Lord Somers for his minister, he declared the Slave Trade to be 'highly beneficial to the nation:' and that this was not meant merely as beneficial to the nation through the medium of the Colonial prosperity, is demonstrated by the Assiento Treaty in 1713, with which the Colonies had nothing to do; and in which Great Britain binds herself to supply 144,000 Slaves, at the rate of 4800 per annum to the Spanish Colonies.

"From that time, till within a few years of the present time, our history is full of the various measures and grants, which passed for the encouragement and protection of the trade.

The Colonies, all this time, took no share in it themselves, merely purchasing what the British Merchants brought them; and doing therein what the British Government invited them to do, by every means in their power.

So much as to those who created and fostered the trade, and now let us see who it was that first marked it with disapprobation, and sought to confine it within narrower bounds.

as will not supersede injury by injury, but do good by certain, though gradual progression.

The Colonies began in 1760. South Carolina (then a British Colony) passed an act to prohibit further importation;—but

Great Britain rejected this act with indignation, and declared that the Slave Trade was beneficial and necessary to the mother-country. The Governor, who passed it, was reprimanded; and a circular was sent to all other Governors, warning them against a similar offence.

The Colonies, however, in 1765, repeated the offence; and a bill was twice read in the Assembly of Jamaica, for the same purpose of limiting the importation of Slaves;—when

Great Britain stopped it, through the Governor of that island, who sent for the Assembly, and told them, that consistently with his instructions, he could not give his assent; upon which the bill was dropped.

The Colonies, in 1774, tried once more; and the Assembly of Jamaica actually passed two bills to restrict the trade;—but

Great Britain again resisted the restriction. Bristol and Liverpool petitioned against it. The matter was referred to the Board of Trade, and that Board reported against it.

The Colonies, by the Agent of Jamaica, remonstrated against that report, and pleaded against it, on all the grounds of justice and humanity;—but

Great Britain, by the mouth of the Earl of Dartmouth, then President of the Board, answered by the following declaration: "We cannot allow the Colonies to check or discourage, in any degree, a traffic so beneficial to the nation." And this was in 1774!

Such are the statements and reasonings which appear to belong to a practical consideration of the West India Question. It will be for the public to judge whether they are not sanctioned by common sense and by the experience of history, and above all, whether they are not reconcilable with the true and genuine spirit of the Resolutions of the House of Commons.

It is presumed, after this, not many persons will be disposed to contend, that Great Britain has not had at least an equal share in establishing slavery with those who happen now to be the actual owners of Slaves.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX A.

THE following Table will strikingly exhibit the different results of free and slave labour in Hayti.

The first column shews the nature and quantity of the productions exported from the *French part* of St. Domingo to *France*, in the year 1789, when labour was performed by Slaves.

The second column shews the productions exported from *the same part of the island*, to *all parts of the world*, *in* 1800, under the military government of Toussaint Louverture.

The third column shews the articles exported from the *whole island*, to *all parts of the world*, in 1822, under the Presidency of General Boyer.

The remaining columns shew the value of the articles exported in these different periods.

COMPARATIVE STATEMENTS of PRODUCE exported

NATURE OF THE GOODS AND PRODUCE EXPORTED.	Quantity of the Articles exported from the French Part of St. Domingo to France, in the Year 1789, according to the Official Accounts of *M. Proissy.*	Quantity of the Articles exported from the French Part of St. Domingo to all Parts of the World, in the Year 1800, according to the Official Accounts of *M. Bizouard.*	Quantity of the Articles exporte from both the French and Spani Parts of St. Domi now called Hayt to all Parts of t World, in the Ye 1822, according t the Official Accou of *M. Inginac.*
MUSCOVADO SUGAR lbs. French.	93,573,300	16,705,000	652,541
CLAYED SUGAR . . . „	47,516,500	. . . .	. . . .
TOPS of Hogshead SUGAR, or 1st qual. MUSCOVADO „	. . . .	28,900	. . . .
COFFEE . . . . . „	76,835,200	27,747,100	35,117,834
INDIGO . . . . . „	758,600	1,900	. . . .
COCOA . . . . . „	150,000	94,500	322,145
COTTON . . . . . „	7,004,200	2,341,900	891,950
SYRUP . . . . . barrels	25,749	. . . .	. . . .
RUM . . . . . hogsheads	598	. . . .	. . . .
HIDES (tanned entire) . . each	9,080	. . . .	. . . .
HIDES (in hair) . . . . each	11,446	. . . .	. . . .
LIGNUM VITÆ and MAHOGANY supposed lbs.	20,000	. . . .	20,100
LOGWOOD . . . . . lbs.	. . . .	. . . .	3,816,583
BLACK AND COLOURED POPULATION . . .	In the French Part of St. Domingo, in 1789, according to M. de Marbois, Intendant of the Colony . . . . . 467,850.		In all Hayti, in 1822, according to M. Inginac, 935,335.

from ST. DOMINGO, in 1789, 1800, and 1822.

Common Rate of Valuation at the Prices of 1789.	Value of the Articles exported in 1789 to France alone.	Value of the Articles exported in 1800 to all Parts of the World.	Value of the Articles exported in 1822 to all Parts of the World.
	Livres.	Livres.	Livres.
At 45 Livres per quintal . .	42,107,985	7,553,250	293,643
At 75 Livres „ . .	35,637,375	. . . .	. . . .
At 55 Livres „ . .	. . . .	15,895	. . . .
At 110 Livres „ . .	84,518,720	30,518,510	38,629,617
At 1,000 Livres „ .	7,586,000	19,000	. . . .
At 80 Livres „ . .	120,000	75,600	257,716
At 170 Livres „ . .	11,907,140	3,981,230	1,516,315
At 110 Livres per barrel . .	2,832,390	. . . .	. . . .
At 132 Livres per hogshead .	78,936	. . . .	. . . .
At 13 Livres each	118,040	. . . .	. . .
At 6 Livres each	68,676	. . . .	. . . .
Computed at	90,000	. . . .	90,450
Computed from the data of Bryan Edwards; Vol. III. p. 215 .	. . . .	. . . .	101,775
TOTAL VALUE . . .	185,065,262	42,163,485	40,889,516

APPENDIX B.

WITH respect to the principles on which this Order in Council was framed, they are detailed with such clearness and eloquence in the speech of Mr. Canning in the commencement of the Session of 1824, that it has been thought preferable to subjoin an extract from that speech, rather than to repeat the explanation in a less perfect manner.

"The course which government intended to be pursued with respect to the Island of Trinidad, will be shown by reference to an Order in Council, which is to be found among the papers laid on the table.

"With the permission of the House, I will state to them shortly the different regulations which that Order in Council comprises. The House will have the goodness to compare what is there done with the statement which I made last session, of what ought to be done; and I think it will appear that none of the points upon which I dwelt, on that occasion, have been neglected.

"In the first place, it is directed by this Order in Council, that the shocking and unseemly practice of the chastisement of females by the whip shall be entirely abolished. Here, Sir, it is but justice to say, that the abolition of this punishment has also been recommended by the Resolutions of the West India body in this country, in the course of last year. It is also no more than justice to add, that some of the colonies have adopted, some even anticipated, the recommendation. To raise the weaker sex in self-respect, as well as in the esteem of the stronger, is the first step from barbarism to civilization.

"The Order in Council next abolishes the use of the whip, when applied to males, as a stimulus to labour;—that wanton

and degrading use of it, which places the Negro Slave on a footing with the cattle of the field. The whip is not to be carried into the field by the driver, nor is it to be borne as a symbol of authority. It is not in any case to be employed summarily;—but it is not, as to males, to be laid aside as an instrument of punishment. The House will see that it is quite a different thing, when brandished as a symbol of authority, and applied to the brute nerves of the Negro as an incitement to labour: or when used for the infliction of a punishment, of which the reasoning faculties of the Slave can appreciate the justice. Even as to males, and as an instrument of punishment, the whip is to be employed only under certain regulations, both with respect to the amount of infliction, and to the time. Delay of punishment for some time after the commission of the offence is the best security against abuse from the suddenness of passion. It is further provided that witnesses shall be present at the punishment of a Slave; and that all punishments shall be accurately recorded. These alterations at once raise the mass of the Negro population from the brute state to that of man.

"To provide the means of religious instruction and worship is an object first indeed in importance, but necessarily subsequent in order to those which I have already mentioned; because it is not till the Slave population are raised in the scale of nature that they can be capable of comprehending, or fitted to receive, the blessings of Christianity. It is intended to increase the amount, and widen the basis of the ecclesiastical establishment in the West Indies. That establishment was founded for the benefit of the white population alone. It was no more calculated for the Negro than for the brute animal that shares his toils. I am not stating this as a matter of charge, but as a matter of fact. This establishment, though founded on the principles of the national church, will not exclude other denominations of Christians. The authority and the discipline of the national church will be lodged in bishops.

to be resident in the colonies. With religious worship will be combined religious instruction. It is not my business on the present occasion to trouble the House with details; but here, again, I am bound to do justice to the West India body in this country, who have declared their anxiety for the institution of religious instruction, and to more than one of the colonies which have already acted upon that declaration.

"Sir, after religious worship and religious instruction, naturally come those charities of life, which religion promotes and sanctifies. The Order in Council enjoins the local government of Trinidad to encourage marriage. This injunction, I am again bound to say, and I do so with much satisfaction, is in perfect consonance with the recommendation of the persons most interested in the colonies who reside in this country, and has also received a ready assent in many of the colonies. In consideration of marriage, and of the other charities of life, which grow out of that connexion, it is provided by the Order in Council, that in all future sales—I fear that I must still use that word—families shall not be separated. In transferring slaves from one property to another, care will be taken in future that husband and wife, or reputed husband and wife, and parent and child, shall not be severed from each other.

"The influence of family ties will naturally beget in the mind of the Slave an increased desire of property. The Order in Council gives the security of law to that possession of property which is at present respected by custom; and enjoins that measures shall be taken to secure to the Slave the power of bequeathing it at his death. In aid of these provisions it has been thought advisable, (however singular it may appear, that a very late invention of a country far advanced in civilization, should be supposed capable of taking root in a rude society like that of the West Indies,)—it has been thought advisable, I say, to institute a Bank, in which the little savings of Slaves may be accumulated. To the right of enjoyment, and to the power of bequest, secured by law, will be thus added the

further security derived from the over-watching eye of public observation.

"Sir, when, by measures of this kind, new ideas are infused into the mind of the negro,—when he is lifted from a level with the beast of the field, when he has been allowed to take his stand amongst the human race—

'*Cœlumque tueri*
Jussus, et erectos ad sidera tollere vultus;'

when he has been taught to appreciate the endearments of family connexions, the ties of kindred, and the blessings of property,—when his nature, as well as his condition, has been thus improved,—then comes the fit opportunity for considering a subject, which is surrounded by many practical difficulties—the admissibility of the evidence of Slaves in courts of justice.

"It would be as wild to say, that the evidence of Slaves should be indiscriminately admitted in all cases, as it would be unjust to exclude it in all cases. In this country, a person in the situation of a Slave,—I do not mean politically, but morally,—an infant, whose mind is not sufficiently expanded to be able to estimate the obligation of an oath, is not permitted to give evidence. It is first ascertained, by examination, that the mind of the infant is in fact so matured, as to be capable of comprehending that obligation. It would be improper to admit the evidence of blacks without a similar guard. It is proposed, therefore, that those persons who are to have the care of instructing the negroes should have power to certify, not with respect to a particular case in which the evidence of a Slave may be wanted, but generally, that such and such Slaves have made such advances in civilization as to be cognizant of the nature of an oath. It is proposed, that a register of such Slaves shall be kept, constituting as it were a privileged class, and presenting (what is the spring of all human action) something like an object of ambition to their fellow-Slaves. Under this arrangement, the competency of a Slave to give evidence

will not be judged by subjecting him at the moment to an examination, probing his intellect to the quick, by questions which he may not be able to comprehend; but it will be known at once, when any individual Slave is proposed as a witness on a trial, whether he is one of that class whose evidence has been certified to be admissible. It is just to state, that under certain qualifications, the evidence of Slaves is already admitted in the courts of justice of Dominica, Grenada, St. Vincent's, and I believe St. Christopher's, and Tobago.

"A natural consequence of the determination to impart religious instruction to the Slaves, will be the abolition of Sunday markets, and of Sunday labour. The Order in Council prescribes this abolition, as soon as the means of religious worship shall be established. It prescribes immediately a restriction of the Sunday market, within certain hours—ultimately, as I have said, its total abolition. In some of the colonies this regulation is already partially anticipated.

"By this process, and by these degrees may the Slave be gradually fitted for the last grand consummation of benefit, the power of acquiring his freedom. Heretofore the restraints on granting manumissions were extremely numerous; but those are now considerably reduced; several taxes and imposts have been removed in different colonies; and in others a like disposition has been manifested. The Order in Council, however, goes beyond what has been hitherto at all generally practised in the colonies. It ordains that a Negro, who has acquired sufficient property, shall, under certain guards and regulations, therein set forth, be entitled to purchase his own freedom, the freedom of his wife, or that of his children.

"I have thus, sir, stated to the House the provisions of the Order in Council. I know that, with respect to the last point, namely, the purchase of freedom, great prejudice, great dislike, great apprehension, prevails. I am far from saying, that it is not a perplexing question; but the principle has been admitted to a certain extent in St. Kitt's, and also at Trinidad.

No principle can be considered as impracticable, which has, even in a single instance, been voluntarily admitted in the West Indies. It is astonishing how much good might be done by merely collecting, and bringing to bear on one society, all the beneficial regulations which are scattered through the different colonies. I admit on the one hand, that the existence of such beneficial regulations affords an answer to the general declamation which has been heard about the total neglect and abandonment of the Negroes by West Indian governments and proprietors: but I must on the other hand contend, that the people of this country, who, on account of their distance from the colonies, are compelled to look at them, through the eyes of others, are entitled to consider as good authority for any improvement of which they recommend the introduction, the fact, that what they wish to recommend has been by any one West Indian community already voluntarily adopted."—pp. 10, &c.

THE END.

ERRATUM.

Page 5, line 6 from the bottom, *for* "that part of the body," *read* "some part of the body."

LONDON:
PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES,
Northumberland-Court.